Committed to Entrepreneurial Activity and Social Mission: What is the Experience of Social Entrepreneurship?

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Abstract

Social entrepreneurship continues to receive significant attention in the academy, practice, and public conversation. As an emerging field, the literature reflects varying perspectives on the topic but offers little on the understanding of the experience of social entrepreneurship. Using van Manenôs (1997) approach to structuring human science research, I used hermeneutic phenomenology to answer the question, ñWhat is it like to be a social entrepreneur?ò A new definition of the work of a social entrepreneur was developed to assist in screening. Eleven social entrepreneurs, representing ten organizations, participated in in-depth interviews transcribed into texts. During the interviews, participants shared experiences reflecting their thoughts, ideas, and feelings about the experience of social entrepreneurship. The texts were analyzed, the results verified with the participants, and needed adjustments made. Three main theme categories were revealed: origins; living the life; and looking forward. Eight themes and 13 subthemes included: (a) personal experience and impactful events as preparation; awareness of community need, and need for change; self-knowledge; tolerance for risk and change, and action orientation (b) integration of business and social principles into structure; personal engagement; defining moments: demands and complexities of the role; relationship aspects; dealing with uncertainty and interaction with outside entities (c) leadership awareness; changing roles and sustainability. The insights gained provide opportunity for practice enhancements and further research on the importance of social need as part of opportunity identification, leadership development in social entrepreneurship, new roles with philanthropy, and the development of metrics to measure effectiveness and support sustainability. Practice implications include

opportunity for new models of community support, teaching of social entrepreneurship and greater involvement of HRD in both practice and leadership. Opportunity exits to expand on the definition of social entrepreneurship.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND OVERVIEW

Social entrepreneurship is a growing phenomenon. Centers for the study and dissemination of information on social entrepreneurship are located at Duke, Stanford, Harvard, and New York universities. Organizations such as the Skoll Foundation and Schwab Foundation host a variety of courses, competitions, and even daily updates on the phenomenon. A recent Internet search for the phrase, ñsocial entrepreneurship,ò produced 1.2 million hits. While one commonly held perspective is that social entrepreneurs are committed to large social change ventures that exist only in the non-profit sector, a second perspective includes for-profit entities created to develop a revenue stream to support a social mission. This project addressed both approaches. No matter what the perspective, there is much conversation surrounding the topic and great interest in the activities of individuals who are leading organizations with both social and entrepreneurial goals. In order more fully to understand this growing phenomenon, this study focused on understanding the experience of those who are engaged in entrepreneurial activity for the ultimate good of others.

The Research Question

The central research question was: What is it like to be a social entrepreneur? To answer this question, I conducted a hermeneutic phenomenological study using in-depth individual interviews with social entrepreneurs within their environmental contexts. Following the guidance of van Manen (1997), this research question requires investigators to enter the lifeworld of the social entrepreneur to gain a deep and rich understanding of the experience. What was learned in this study will serve to understand

better the complexities and challenges in the day-to-day lived experience of a social entrepreneur to inform theory and practice. The findings of this study could also help educate future social entrepreneurs so they can more fully understand the process of becoming a social entrepreneur. This knowledge could also benefit the teaching of entrepreneurship, especially as it interests those students who want to explore the field of social entrepreneurship. What is learned may also advance the use of social entrepreneurship as an approach to solve community problems.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of what it is like to be a social entrepreneur. While there have been numerous definitions of social entrepreneurship in the past two decades, one of the most commonly held is from Dees (1998, 2001) who described the work of social entrepreneurs, which ñcombines the passion of a social mission with an image of business-like disciplineò (p. 1). Deesô explanation is inclusive of entrepreneurs who lead innovative non-profit ventures, social purpose business ventures, and hybrid, not-for-profit, and for-profit ventures. Simanowitz (2003) has written on the topic of the impact of the ñdouble bottom lineò (p. 1). In micro finance organizations (MFOs), the double bottom line covers the impact of both social performance end economic performance. Austin, Stevenson and Wei-Skillern (2006) described social entrepreneurship as an ñinnovative social value creating activity that can occur within or across non-profit, business or government sectorsò (p. 2). While these definitions offer a perspective of what social entrepreneurship is, there is a need to understand more fully the experience of the social entrepreneur. A search of databases of digital dissertations suggested that no such research appears to exist.

An Orientation to the Phenomenon

A well-known example of a social entrepreneur is 2003 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Muhammad Yunuus, who founded the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh in 1983. Yunuusô goal was to reduce poverty and provide economic opportunity for rural women villagers in Bangladesh (Bornstein, 2007). Sometimes called the father of micro-credit, Yuunus developed a program that gave small loans primarily to women to allow them to become financially independent. More recently, over a ten-year period, the program provided rural residents with leased cell phones in order to trade grain from village to village for a profit. By paying back their loans with their profits, the women replenished the fund for others. Yuunus effectively combined the emerging technology of cell phones and the differing market needs for grain into thousands of small business opportunities.

While the work of Yuunus may be the most familiar, other social entrepreneurs developed micro-credit models that precede or are contemporary to Yuunus (Boyatzis and Khawaja, 2009). Yuunus was a student of Dr. Kameer Kahn, who in 1959 began the early work to create the Comilla Academy and Orgi project in the former East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. Named for the two villages where they were started, these two projects used a grass roots approach, local leadership, and education and training to establish a successful micro-credit and community development initiative.

In 1984, John Scofield and John Hatch founded The Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA). Scofield, now the president and CEO, was a Peace Corps volunteer in the 70ôs. He accepted an invitation from Hatch, a Fulbright scholar, who was working in South America to help farmers improve their crops using affordable

methods. Capital was almost non-existent to farmers, and, if available, it came at very high rates. FINCA became an alternative lender to farmers and now serves close to 900,000 clients across the world in six continents as a full-service financial services organization with loans averaging $600 (Chandler, 2011).

Starting off as small projects, Bornstein (2007) reported that the field of micro-lending has grown in less than twenty years from a ñfew dozen participants to over 3,100 micro-lenders with 82 million customersò (p. 277). The 2012 Micro Summit Campaign Report indicated of the 3,652 verified micro-finance programs, 95% were in developing countries of the sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean with the remaining 5% in North America, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Valadez and Buskirk described continuing expansion (2010), citing Goldsworthy (2010), Reille (2010), and Daley-Harris (2009). They related that micro-credit has now emerged as a ñworldwide effort by different organizations claiming a gross loan portfolio of over forty-three billion dollars through 2009 with over five-hundred million borrowers and their families being affectedò (p. 2).

Bornstein has also studied The Ashoka Institute, an international organization that helps social entrepreneurs with rigorous learning and funding. Since its founding by William Drayton in 1997, it has helped two thousand social entrepreneurs in seventy countries. Bornstein suggested that social entrepreneurs have been around for a long time, considering Saint Francis of Assisi and Florence Nightingale two of the most successful. Bornstein (2007) related how both changed social systems, developed new organizations that addressed complex social problems, demonstrated personal credibility, and generated follower commitments.

Significance of the Study

This study is important for several reasons. Because entrepreneurship itself is in a theory-building mode, Zahra (2007) posited that there is a need to learn what the experience of entrepreneurs is to be able to understand better its dimensions within the context of a specific experience. He suggested that ñcase studies and qualitative research may offer rich insight into the factors that lead particular entrepreneurs to focus on creating new industries, the various steps they take, and the consequences of these actionsò (p. 450).

Despite increasing interest in social entrepreneurship, studies that focus solely on the experience of the social entrepreneur are negligible. Mort, Weerwardena, and Carnegie (2003) described social entrepreneurship as a ñmulti-dimensional construct reflecting the key operational characteristics of NFPs [not forï profits]ò (p.77), arguing that it is studied in diffuse and fragmented ways, and that a single dimensional approach is inadequate to capture the complex nature of social entrepreneurship. They suggested social entrepreneurship ideally be defined by four dimensions: the ñexpression of entrepreneurially virtuous behavior to achieve social mission, coherent unity of purpose and action in the face of moral complexity, the creation of value-creating opportunities, and the use of key decision making characteristics of innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-takingò (p. 76).

Concurrently, an increasing number of colleges and universities have expanded their entrepreneurship programs to reflect a growing interest in the subject, offering both courses and practical experience in social entrepreneurship forums. Tracey and Phillips (2007) critiqued a special entrepreneurship issue of the Academy of Management

Learning and Education Journal and challenged the Academy to include guidance on the training and development of social entrepreneurs. Light (2005) suggested that the explosion of media interest in the topic, evidenced by the *Fast Company* social enterprise awards, the PBS originated video series called ñThe New Heroesò, and the recent weekly series NOW, highlighted the work of social entrepreneurs. Light suggests there is value to define and expand the definition of social entrepreneurship, and what makes social entrepreneurship a reality. Because there are differing perspectives on the topic, he also proposed that research will help uncover if it is truly the work of unique individuals ñwho struggle greatly or if it is more of a natural actò (p. 251), and a much larger number of individuals and entities qualify. Social entrepreneurs who have chosen this work can also benefit by gaining a better understanding of the unique characteristics, challenges and potential opportunities for achieving their goals.

Finally, the topic is related to my field of human resource development (HRD). The work of social entrepreneurs can affect individuals and organizations, the economy, quality of life issues, and career development choices. One of the broadest and most inclusive definitions of HRD was developed in 1964 by economists Harbison and Meyers, who called HRD the ñprocess of increasing knowledge, skills and capacities of all people in a societyò (p. 2). In describing the importance of economic goals, they also stressed that ñhuman resource development is a necessary conditionò (p. 13) for achieving the political, social, and cultural goals that are important in a society. The contributions of this study may help advance the work that social entrepreneurs have determined to be important in a society. In response to the challenge of defining HRD, McLean and Mclean (2001) incorporated into their definition of HRD:

> Human resource development is any process or activity, that initially, or over the long term, has the potential to develop adultsô work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit for an organization, community, nation or ultimately, the whole of humanity. (p. 322)

Swanson (1995) posited that HRD makes a unique contribution to organizational effectiveness by being able to integrate interdisciplinary bases of economics, systems theory, and psychology. Gibson and Hanes (2003) suggest ñphenomenological research with its emphasis on holism, can be used in support of research that wishes to look at a phenomenon through multidisciplinary lensesò (p. 200).

My History and Perspective

Being in a doctoral program for over ten years gave one much opportunity to make false starts and detours in the selection of a topic. Always interested in innovation, I had previously considered the study of innovation and creativity in organizations with various permutations. I came to select the topic of social entrepreneurship as my research focus after a long period of exploring values and interests and a greater understanding of who I have become. Having lived a life and career blessed with rich and varied experiences, you can almost say social entrepreneurship as an emerging field has drawn me to it in the same way I have evolved. Both words--social and entrepreneurship--hold a strong interest that has developed over time, both in my studies and in my life.

The Formative Years

To illustrate the value of social concern, I will describe how parental expectations in my family of origin shaped my early and adult life. I was raised with an expectation to

work hard, take responsibility, help others, and be creative. We learned to value achievement and recognition, but often with a bit of discomfort. I have often wondered if this was false modesty or a sense of disbelief because of the modest family means and first generation immigrant family history. I recall Mom telling stories of childhood teasing from schoolmates that would still bring her to tears.

I was born the eldest of four children to parents who were determined and strong-willed Polish Catholics. My father died at the age of 91 and my mother, though handicapped with Alzheimerôs, is alive at 97. Family-oriented, church committed, and generous with their contributions to those who were less fortunate, my parentsô expectations for their children were set high, and family and extended family surrounded us. Time for play happened after work and church; providing for others in need with physical or emotional help had prominence when lined up with our own needs. The family norm was to embrace the challenge of making something from nothing or fixing the broken or restoring a project. It happened in part because it was less expensive, but more often the goal was to invent something because nothing was impossible--you were smart and could do it. I think of Byrdôs definition of innovation when I think of my family. Byrd (1991) defined innovation as the result of being creative or the ability to generate new ideas and taking risks, defined as the ability to move ideas forward in the face of adversity.

My parents were children of first- and second-generation immigrants who struggled financially and had large families. My father had an 8th grade education and my mother was a high school graduate who worked as a career secretary. During my growing up years, my parents planned and dreamed and talked about being entrepreneurs

but did not act on their many ideas to start a business and make money. Some of their many plans were to open a tree nursery or build a kolache shop or a public rose garden. Yet they hesitated even though they had the land, the required commercial ñright-of-way,ò and could easily obtain the needed permits. Their unwillingness to take financial risk may have been influenced by the fact that my paternal grandfather had lost thousands of dollars in the 1929 stock market crash, or perhaps it was just more fun to dream about the possibility.

Taking other risks was quite common. In our family, these risks have taken on almost a mythical proportion. My father was an electric power lineman most of his working life, handling cables, sometimes on a daily basis, with 100,000 volts surging through them. During World War II, he received a bronze star for saving the lives of over one hundred men by thwarting an explosion of a bubbling tar caldron, heaving it out of the way in the nick of time. For my mother, exploring new career opportunities was exciting as she traveled the state alone during the depression and World War II, setting up offices for the new Farm Security government agency. At the end of the war, she was invited to Washington, D.C., to manage the office of a new congressman but turned it down because of her new pregnancy. At the age of 65, retiring from a career in office support, she shaped a new 18-year stint as a newspaper proofreader and cooking columnist.

In other ways, the entrepreneurial and innovative interests and abilities of my parents were evident and, in retrospect, were always on behalf of others. Forty years ago, my parents and two friends created and sold a cookbook that raised nearly $10,000 to renovate their church basement. My father, George, invented key elements of a bucket

truck lift machine for his employer, an electric utility company, that is still in use today. Until his recent death, he described the mechanical device with both pride and regret for its long-lasting value but, personally, a missed financial opportunity. At our recent family auction, we found the original prototype for a ósnow slideô he made thirty years ago to clear snow off the roof in the winter. I believe that Georgeôs lack of formal education past the eighth grade may have inhibited his confidence and ability to advance his ideas. Always the supporter of their children, encouraging us to read and ask questions, these parents intended each of us to graduate from college and advance our education as far as we could. All four of us have graduated college, and two have advanced degrees.

As the oldest of four children, I was the frequent caretaker of my siblings. It was more work than fun in most cases, but I learned a lot about responsibility. My siblings will tell tales of my management style and motivational tactics on how to get the house cleaned in record time by listening to a 33 1/3 LP on 45 rpm speed!

My parentsô goals and wishes have affected my life in many ways. I value reading, learning, creativity, and inspiring others to achieve their dreams. I treasure our home and family and bring color, textiles, and flowers to a garden when I make the time. Several months ago, when we became members of a large church congregation, I inquired regarding any possible ministry to support the unemployed and those in career transition. Efforts for a start-up program for job transition support ministry resulted in a support, networking, and education group. It is easy to take on a challenge and try and figure out ways to make a difference. I thrive on making concepts a reality. When

Captain Jean Luc Picard of the USS Enterprise, one of my heroes, challenges his crew to ñmake it so,ò I have to chuckle because it sounds so familiar.

Early Career Influences

As referenced earlier, my parents were highly supportive of education so going to college was a shared goal. I was encouraged in career choice by my motherôs best friend, Geri, who was a registered nurse; the second option offered was nun! I opted for the first because the fast pace suited me, and I wanted to marry soon. At the age of 19, I graduated from junior college and became licensed as a registered nurse. The work was different and more challenging than I ever anticipated, and the responsibilities were heavy, physically and psychologically, given my age. In working with patients and families on their medical concerns, I realized that, when I focused on the topics of family, community, and social issues they faced, the work was more satisfying, and my contributions were more significant. I was also gaining new communication expertise. I approached the director of a start-up community clinic to obtain a position as a family health nurse. The purpose of the new role of a family health nurse was to increase access to services for the underserved and promote preventative care. There was a slight problem, however. This position was designed for nurses who possessed a bachelorôs degree, and I had only a two-year college degree. With brash naiveté and a high persistence level, I finally convinced the hiring manager to employ me. It was an exhilarating position and I thrived.

This period in the 70s was a very exciting time as many social issues were being addressed in the community. I was a sponge for learning and felt comfortable listening and trying to understand the experience of what my clients were experiencing. The

American Indian Movement had its first office just blocks from our clinic site. As a family nurse, my client base was growing through parent-to-parent referrals, and my caseload of families were nearly all of American Indian heritage, and many spoke little English. I recall going with a family to the American Indian Center to obtain living and food services support, watching Indian activists riding patrol with Minneapolis police to curtail reported beatings in the Indian community. This experience stayed with me, and I eventually completed a bachelorôs degree in Native American Studies and Education. I am grateful for the privilege of gaining a greater understanding of anotherôs culture and experience.

During the next significant period of my career, I worked initially part-time in the field of adolescent psychiatry with children and teenagers and enjoyed my role as wife and mother of young children. The work focused on developing relationships, observing and monitoring mental health, and developing healthy patterns. Listening and verbal skills were the core competencies needed to do the work, and, again, the experience of learning anotherôs perspective was important. As a practitioner, I provided direct care, and then later, as a manager, I helped and taught others to do the same

Entrepreneurial Sidelines

Entrepreneurship has fascinated me for years. I have vivid recall of my earliest personal entrepreneurial endeavor at age six that makes me smile. My mother and I traveled with my father during the summer to the electric power line construction site for his project assignment. One summer we lived in a rented trailer house on the banks of the Minnesota River where the usual evening activity was to go fishing. As the only child in camp, I would scheme with my mother about what to do during the day, and the fishing

activity provided me with an opportunity. I dug worms and sold them. Gathering the product was almost as much fun as selling the worms. We found great worm-filled spaces under boards, under rocks, and in cool shady spaces. I remember the joy on the faces of my fatherôs co-workers when I presented cups of squiggly, fat worms at the end of a long day and my delight as shiny nickels dropped in my hand.

Fast forward thirty years. Determined to become an entrepreneur at some point, a lifelong friend and I formed a company over twenty-five years ago. Embracing the notion fully, we formed a corporation, issued shares of stock, and raised 1000 dollars of seed capital. We developed a business plan, met with bankers, and applied for a business loan through the SBA. Convinced of the merit of our plan, we also persuaded our spouses that we should all take on mortgages as loan guarantee to fund the publishing and operating expenses of our company. Our corporation, aôCado Co., Inc., designed and published a wall calendar. Looking back, we did everything that one should not have done as an entrepreneur. We had no experience. We had a single product with a short life, had done no market research, and were the producers, writers, photographers, sales force, shipping department, and marketing staff. Our calendar about growing avocado pits was a novel idea, but not a business opportunity. Totally unsuccessful with our first project, we continued working at our day jobs and persistently pursued another calendar project. This time we developed a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society on Minnesota Heritage Restaurants. The project also failed, and we ultimately paid off the loans after a long period. It is amazing that we have remained friends. I have used this example many times as a teaching example of how not to approach entrepreneurship.

Emerging Influence of HRD

The entrepreneurial activities were put to rest, and I became a mid-level health care manager, overseeing the operations of a behavior health program with responsibility for a several $1,000,000 budget. With responsibility to both provide quality care and service and oversight of the business aspects, I began to see the relationship between mission and resources and the meaning of the familiar phrase, ñno margin, no mission ò (Wolff, 1993, p. 39). With a new appreciation of the relationship between organizational life and business acumen in the nonprofit world of healthcare, I began checking out colleges to explore an advanced degree. I sought a degree that would advance my knowledge and skill in both work and human experience. I first attended a masterôs program in business management. The business focus was interesting but narrow, and I will always value having taken accounting. I investigated other options and selected a program in human resource development.

During the next seven years, I completed graduate school at the University of St Thomas and kept full-time employment in the general field of organizational learning. During and after graduate school, I was privileged to hold positions of increasing responsibility, serving as directors of education and special HR projects in the health field. Nearly every position I held during this period was new, or I was responsible for starting a re-design or a new business center. I unknowingly assumed the role of corporate entrepreneur or intrapreneur (Morris & Kuratko, 2002), one who creates business opportunities from within an organization.

The Transition to Education and Entrepreneurship

After 30 years of working in healthcare, I wanted to experience another world of work. I told my family, friends, and colleagues that I planned ñto see if there was life outside healthcareò by seeking work in an alternate professional field if anyone would hire me. Filled with a good deal of apprehension and the knowledge that I would now be a novice, I was fortunate to obtain two opportunities. I worked at two private colleges for 10 years in staff roles in training and development, and eventually taught part-time. I also began the doctoral program at the University of Minnesota in human resource development during this period, with an expressed desire to learn more about innovation and how it is expressed in organizations.

A critical career juncture in this journey occurred in 2002. I was serving as Associate Dean of Continuing Education and New Initiatives at St. Catherine University. One of our key lines of business was to offer training and development to organizations and women executives. In the period following 9/11, I was unable to meet our revenue targets and my department was cut. I was totally stunned to have lost my position. It was even more surprising when the next day I was offered one of two part-time project leader roles as a transition. The first option was to lead a palliative, end-of life care initiative that would draw heavily on my healthcare experience. The second option was to develop an Institute for Women Entrepreneurs to help women lead and grow their businesses. The latter was appealing, and I chose it for several reasons. It would give me access to entrepreneurs where I might be able to learn more about the subject, and there might be potential for teaching an undergraduate course on the subject. I would have the opportunity to learn first hand both how to support women growing their own businesses

and their barriers to success. After two years in this role, I had an opportunity to teach, and I developed two introductory courses on entrepreneurship; one for liberal arts majors, and the second for business majors. During four semesters, over fifty women completed the courses. I valued the experience and also became aware of an interesting pattern. Approximately one-fourth of the women who took the course were interested in creating a business that integrated social and financial returns, which seemed to describe a blended value proposition (Emerson 2003). This was described in varying terms (Dart 2004; Haugh & Kitson, 2007; Ridley-Duff, 2007) as social enterprise, which encompasses goals of financial success and socially oriented change. As examples, these students were interested in establishing successful businesses, such as a coffee shop that would also build stronger communities, an Asian arts and dance center to preserve and teach culture, a new form of tutoring service for students of color to improve learning, or create a line of teaching toys that would also reduce educational disparities. Each of these students created business plans with the intention to generate financial success but consistently incorporated a social mission. Their expressed desire to learn more about this dual approach helped direct me to the topic of social entrepreneurship.

Current Life Influences

Gadamer (1994) posited that traditions and assumptions within the scientific community influence what and how we view the world and what we pay attention to. Dahlberg, Drew and Nystrom (2001) suggested that paradigms heavily influence what a researcher studies and the ñparadigms themselves are influenced by the research direction and the researcherôs interest and investment . . . ñ (p. 33). I am appreciative of this

perspective because it helps me understand my personal and professional interest in the topic.

In reflecting on my career and life work, I have tried to think like an entrepreneur, seeking opportunity and change with a goal to deliver results via a service profession. I do not think that my parents were social entrepreneurs, nor am I, but the phenomenon fosters an approach to issues that integrate business acumen and opportunity seeking to create something that has value while using creativity and social compassion. I believe that my career journey has led me to develop a strong interest in social entrepreneurs because of the dual nature of this phenomenon--entrepreneurship and social impact.

In retrospect, when I began the HRD program over ten years ago, I had very little formal knowledge about entrepreneurship. I have discovered that entrepreneurial and innovative activity has been part of my life and family values with its stories, experiences of trial and error, and missed opportunities. Proposing a study on the phenomena of social entrepreneurship revealed a deep and abiding interest in the topic, and I am privileged because it has given me an opportunity to contribute knowledge about the experience.

In the great majority, my professional opportunities in non-profits have been to create a start up or transform a department or organization with a dual expectation of serving a mission and promoting financial viability. Recently, I learned that one of the reasons I was hired on in my current role as chief executive officer of a community clinic is that ñI can think like an entrepreneur.ò In this position, sometimes I feel like a pseudo social entrepreneur. Though I was not the founder of the organization, I need to encourage and model entrepreneurial thinking and direct goals and outcomes to assure

that we did well on our bottom line in order to do good. With a goal to increase access to healthcare for underserved and uninsured, I am charged with identifying and creating opportunity--more patients, more funding, and better processes. These have been part of my everyday experience for over six years.

Summary

In this chapter I have described the importance of understanding more about the experience of social entrepreneurs and the potential knowledge it can contribute to the field of human resource development and entrepreneurship. With few sources available to understand the experience of social entrepreneurs, I used a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to this research. Because the research was situated in the everyday experience or the lifeworld of individual social entrepreneurs, what was learned will contribute to a greater understanding of this phenomenon.

In the following chapters, I have shown how this topic is important because of what it can contribute given a seemingly paradoxical set of circumstances--do good and do well for the purpose of potentially changing society in positive ways. I offered a cautionary note of self-awareness as I began the project, however. I believe my strong interest and modest experience in the topic was also my greatest challenge in having successfully completed this research. I valued the guidance of my adviser truly to listen, to discover, and make known some of my preconceived notions and to be open to the experiences of social entrepreneurs in a full and complete way. Van Manen (1997) described this behavior of suspending oneôs own various beliefs in the reality of the natural world in order to study the essential structures of the world as bracketing or reduction. I believe my interviewing skills, developed in years of one-on-one patient-

nurse experiences, and my service as a mentor, communicator, and manager helped. I was privileged to learn about the experiences of being a social entrepreneur and now to contribute what I can to the field.

CHAPTER 2

PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

I conducted a preliminary review of literature on social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurship, keeping in mind an eye toward finding links to the field of HRD in the search process. The purpose of this initial review was to provide general background on the topic and to help me focus a potential study on social entrepreneurs. The next step was to explore if there was opportunity to study social entrepreneurs using a phenomenological approach to answer the question, ñwhat is it like to be a social entrepreneur ?ò I conducted a search of digital dissertations and the academic literature over a period of one year using the words ñsocial entrepreneurò and ñsocial entrepreneurshipò and would add the words qualitative, phenomenology and interpretive and HRD to further refine the searches. I used ERIC, Business Source Premier and key journals of AHRD, the Academy of Management, and the journals focusing on entrepreneurship, small business and business ventures.

The results of the searches revealed a variety of available research and resources on social entrepreneurship presented in articles, books, on-line sources, and professional papers. Topics frequently reported were the definition of social entrepreneurship, how social and commercial entrepreneurship were alike or different, opportunity recognition, entrepreneurship education, and how to approach research in the field. Other entrepreneurship research emerged on the characteristics of the social entrepreneur, scalability of the entrepreneurôs organization, or a series of case presentations on specific social enterprise projects. Throughout the search process, I was unable to locate any research whose intended purpose or result was specifically to understand the experience

of the social entrepreneur and to answer the question, ñwhat is it like to be a social entrepreneur?ò

At this stage of my proposal development, I tried not to read too extensively in the field in order to avoid biasing my perspectives; I recognized the importance of bracketing. Thus, the intent was to identify whether there was a gap and some basic understanding of the field, with the plan of conducting an extensive literature review following analysis of the data, examining how the literature agreed or differed from the emerging themes in this study.

Defining the Concept in an Emerging Field

In addition to the sources shared in Chapter 1 that described the importance of and need for the study, the following are examples of perspectives on social entrepreneurship that further strengthened the need to understand more fully the experience of a social entrepreneur.

Mair and Marti (2006) suggested that the concept of social entrepreneurship is still ñpoorly defined and its boundaries to other fields of study remain fuzzyò (p. 37). The authors viewed this lack of definition as an opportunity for researchers from many fields, including entrepreneurship, to challenge and rethink its concepts and was a helpful basis on which to start my work. Honig (2009) described how social entrepreneurship is gaining greater notoriety as a means to assist individuals and organizations in adjusting to new circumstances in the world, attracting the interest of policy makers and researchers.

The *Social Edge* (2006) made reference to Youngôs early research on social entrepreneurship emerging in 1986, in which social entrepreneurs were initially described as non-profit ñinnovators, who found new organizations, develop and implement new

programs, organize and expand new services and redirected the activities of faltering organizationsò (p. 162). Dees (1998, 2001) focused on the description of a social entrepreneur and promoted the concept of the entrepreneur as a strong visionary leader with a social mission. Waddock and Post (1991) identified a type of private citizen ñsocial entrepreneur who brings about catalytic social changes in the public sector agenda and the perceptions of certain social issuesò (p. 393). Thompson (2002) identified a series of cases and a typology of social entrepreneurship in the United Kingdom. He shared cases from a variety of sectors and described how social entrepreneurs responded to the social demands of the 1990s caused by decreased government funding and increased privatization.

Impact and Scope

It was important to define the scope of the literature review. I reviewed literature that encompassed the study of both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship in order to present as full a picture of the field as possible. I first searched for the earliest sources on the topic and found that the literature sources for both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship are closely linked. I reflected on Dees (1998a, 2001) who suggested we ñbuild our understanding of social entrepreneurship on the strong tradition of entrepreneurship theory and research. Social entrepreneurs are one species in the genus entrepreneurò (p. 2). Noruzi et al, (2010) argued that ñany definition of the term social entrepreneurship must start with the word entrepreneurship. The word social simply modifies entrepreneurshipò (p. 4).

In his work to advance the scholarship of entrepreneurship, Ventkatmaran (1997) reported how the field seeks to understand ñhow opportunities to bring into existence

future goods and services are discovered, created, and exploited, by whom and with what consequencesò (p.120). He argued that ñtwo issues are of particular interest to scholars in entrepreneurship: the source of opportunities and the nexus of opportunity and enterprising individualsò (p.121). Shane and Venkatamaran (2000) included the processes of discovery, evaluation and exploitation and the individuals who do this. The process of entrepreneurship (Shane et al, 2003) begins with identifying an entrepreneurial opportunity. This is followed by how to develop it; evaluate its feasibility; developing the product or service; assembling of the resources both financial and human; designing an organization; and then pursue customers. Shane, Locke, and Collins (2003) argued that a person's self evaluation will influence the likelihood that they will exploit any entrepreneurial opportunity. The literature seemed to give guidance that understanding the process of entrepreneurship must be considered but offered no reference to what might be relevant for social entrepreneurs.

Segal, Borgia, and Schoenfield (2006) completed a study on the motivation to become an entrepreneur. The study showed a positive relationship for an individualôs net desirability for self-employment, entrepreneurial, self-efficacy, and tolerance for risk. Krueger (1993) confirmed Shapero (1975, 1982) that entrepreneurial intentions found associations between feasibility, desirability expectations and propensity to act. He also suggests that positive prior experiences was associated with the breadth of prior experience.

Krueger and Dickson (1994) and Krueger and Brazeal (1994) showed that entrepreneurial optimism is related to self-efficacy beliefs. Guth and Tagiuri (1991) found that ñentrepreneurs optimism was an inside view of the potential success of the

venture largely based on the entrepreneurs evaluation of their abilities and knowledgeò (p. 125).

Emerging Literature in the Field

Social entrepreneurship literature has focused largely on the characteristics of social entrepreneurs, how to define the field of social entrepreneurship, and how it differs from commercial entrepreneurship (Austin et al, 2006; Dees, 1998a, 1998 b; Drayton 2002; Emerson & Twersky 1996; Leadbeater 1997; Thompson, 2002;. Thompson et al, 2000). Nicholls (2006) cited Johnson (2005) who after a review of the literature, concluded that it is difficult to define and establish boundaries in the field. The field is complex; new and little consensus has emerged. The studies that were presented did not offer context which my proposed study on the experience of social entrepreneurs would provide.

As a field of study, Christie and Honig (2006) support further scholarship in social entrepreneurship. They recounted how initial literature on social entrepreneurship began appearing in the mid-90ôs and as in any new field, the challenges of defining that new field, building theory and addressing strategic issues are important. Martin and Osborg (2006) saw the ñcritical distinction between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship lies in the value proposition itselfò (p. 34). They describe how the commercial entrepreneur is organized to serve markets that can afford the new product or service, while the social entrepreneur does not organize to create substantial profit but to create large scale social change that targets the underserved and neglected sectors of society.

Roper and Cheney (2005) cited Giddens, (1998) who suggested that social entrepreneurship provides a ñthird wayò (p. 96) of assuring societyôs sustainability beyond the creation of economic and social value. Silverman and Taliento (2006) reviewed the challenges and skills required to lead non-profit organizations, where most social entrepreneurs reside.

In 2006, an entire issue of the *Journal of World Business* focused on the topic of social entrepreneurship. Peredo and McLean (2006) identified what they believed are the key elements of social entrepreneurship in action. Stevensôs (2003) contribution added to the field by discussing the role of non-profit founders. Sherman (2005) studied the efforts of social entrepreneurs to scale up or expand their organizations. Mair and Marti (2006) also offered a new framework for studying the field. They posited that the study of social entrepreneurs should focus on the founder or the initiative; social entrepreneurship research should focus on the process or the behaviors, and social enterprise is the tangible outcome of the first two. My proposed study is focused on the experience of the social entrepreneur, but keeping such clear lines of separation may be difficult. They also suggested that approaching social entrepreneurship is more than the difference between a for-profit or non-profit venture. Mair and Marti (2006) offered an expanded scope of who is considered a social entrepreneur, asserting that ñthe main difference between entrepreneurship in the business sector and social entrepreneurship is the relative priority given to social wealth creation vs. economic wealth creationò (p. 39).

In looking for what made social entrepreneurs become who they are the literature offered few resources. Prabhu (1999) suggests that the backgrounds of social entrepreneurial leaders are varied and noted that ña trigger event in their present career or

a psychological upheaval can shift some people towards social entrepreneurial leadershipò, but comments that it ñis usually a multi-causal effectò (p.143). Roberts and Woods (2005) offer a case study portraying a social entrepreneur who transitioned a bad business experience into transformative social change.

In a study of six cases of social entrepreneurship in the UK, Thompson, Alvy and Lee (2000) noted a range of needs through the experiences of community members. They found that some needs are driven the by the experience of an individual, and other needs by necessity in light of a community crisis. Grantôs (2004) study of Anita Rodding, the founder of the *Body Shop,* described how Ms. Rodding instilled social values from childhood into her organization, creating a commercial venture that incorporated those values.

Ferri and Urbano (2011) conducted a study of cross-country models of social entrepreneurship. They reported that social need is one of three key factors in the environment that affect social entrepreneurial activity. They referenced Bornstein (2007) who suggested that the study of social entrepreneurship sheds light on how societies renew themselves. People who were dissatisfied with the status quo sought alternatives to the old approaches.

While this study described local and regional efforts of social entrepreneurship, Waddock and Post (1991) also described national and global initiatives. Their study of how *Hands Across America* and the *Partnership for a Drug Free America* demonstrated the importance of a vision and what would happen if a change was made. They posit that the grand vision and scope of the change, gave a sense that they [the entrepreneur] would be able to accomplish the impossible.

Dart (2004) stated that most of the social entrepreneurship literature (Brinkerhoff, 2000, G. Dees et al., 2001) observes in part, ñMuch of the social entrepreneurship literature advocates the coupling of business-like goals and business-like strategies and tactics to achieve the goalsò (p. 305). In a single in-depth case study, he suggested that the use of business like goals used in a non-profit setting are more widely used and broader than is reflected in the literature. A shift to more business-like models transformed the services into fundamentally different organizations.

Guclu, Dees and Anderson, et al, (2002) discussed the importance of personal fit for the work of social entrepreneur. They suggest that while new ventures are demanding, social ventures are even more so. The difficulty in balancing goals of social impact with financial need require commitment and determination in addition to a ñdeep passion for the social cause, minus an expectation of significant financial gainsñ (p. 13).

Waddock and Post (1991) argued that social entrepreneurs who are successful catalysts of social change ñhad an extensive network of personal and business contacts that could be tapped for action as they began to build an organization to fulfill their visionò (p. 397). Baron and Markman (2003) found that a ñhigh level of social capital (e.g. favorable reputation, extensive social network, etc.) assists entrepreneurs in gaining access to persons important for their success, but once the access is obtained, social competence influences the outcomes they experienceò (p. 41). As Alvord et al, (2004) noted, in western culture, the characteristics of leadership of social entrepreneurial ventures seems to focus on the skills and attributes of the individual (Gardner, 1995; Heifetz 1994). In other cultures, this success can be attributed to groups, (Morris & Paul, 1982; Thake & Zadek, 1997). Somewhat related, there is a shift in the practice of

leadership (Martin & Ernst, 2005) from more traditional individual approaches to more innovative collaborative approaches. In comparing US and non US data, non US populations expect more innovative leadership approaches in the future.

Summary

This preliminary literature review supported the need for more research to understand the world of the social entrepreneur. The review found that this topic is emerging as a scholarly endeavor and suggested that as it matures, the field would benefit from a variety of perspectives to more fully understand the phenomenon. The literature was limited in its ability to present a deep understanding of what embodies the lived experience of a social entrepreneur. The literature also supported that a study in an emerging or new field such as social entrepreneurship, points to the use of interpretive research. I was unable to locate literature in the field of social entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship and HRD that specifically referred to the experience of social entrepreneurs. As stated previously, what has been learned in this study will serve to better understand the lifeworld of the social entrepreneur, and to inform theory and practice. The findings of this study will also help educate future social entrepreneurs so they can more fully understand the process of becoming a social entrepreneur and anticipate what the experience will be like. This knowledge will also benefit the teaching of entrepreneurship, especially as it interests those students who want to explore teaching social entrepreneurship. It can also support those HRD scholars and professionals who serve the entrepreneurial community to develop a greater understanding of this phenomenon.

The second literature review, implemented after the themes were identified, is reported in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, METHODS, and DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the human experience of social entrepreneurs. To gain this understanding, I used hermeneutic phenomenology, a qualitative or interpretive methodology. The interpretive paradigm or approach fits my belief of how the world is experienced and the world is shaped by the personal experiences of those who live it. This chapter describes the methodology, methods, and my assumptions as a researcher. Using van Manenôs (1997) approach to structuring human science research, I also described the methods of participant selection, the process I used to gather the data, how I safeguarded the information, and the process used to analyze the data.

Interpretive Research as a Methodology

As Swanson, Watkins, and Marsick suggested (1997), there is pragmatic value in qualitative research because it has held the promise of studying people and events in a rapidly changing environment, especially dealing with the nature of a ñmessy realityò (p. 90). The intended purpose of this study required an interpretive methodology or paradigm that could be attained by entering the world of the participants. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) reflect that ñqualitative researchers have assumed that qualified, competent observers, can with objectivity, clarity and precision, report on their own observations of the social world, including the experience of othersò (p. 29). They described how all research ñis interpretive; it is guided by the researcherôs set of beliefs and feelings about the world, and how it should be studiedò (p. 31).

Describing how new philosophies emerge, Kuhn (1970) suggested that scientific knowledge is not on a continuous growth path. Instead, it undergoes periodic revolutions of thought inquiry and paradigm shifts that alter complete modes of thought and are replaced by new ones. Alveeson (2004) asserted that ñknowledge and theory in social science are never about presenting the absolute truth or an objective picture in any abstract or neutral way. . . . We always proceed from our own pre-understanding based on our conscious and unconscious assumptions and expectationsò (p. 236).

The Origins of Phenomenology

Phenomenology, stated Stewart and Mickunas (1990), was derived from two Greek words, phainomenon (an appearance) and logos (reason or word). As philosophers, phenomenologists study the experience of a phenomenon, explaining that anything that appears to consciousness is an object of legitimate inquiry. Phenomenology contrasts with a positivist view of the world, which believes that there is one truth or knowledge to be discovered and verified. Phenomenology developed as a human science because philosophers desired a new way of knowing. Believing that human action is given to subjective meaning and human science exists to hear, understand, and discover knowledge, Polkinghorne (2005) asserted that this deepens the understanding of the human experience because there is no objective reality.

The research question of ñwhat is the experience of social entrepreneurship?ò, required an approach that emphasized the gathering and interpretation of information to uncover the meaning of human experience in a specific context. Phenomenology asks, ñWhat is it like?ò in order to comprehend the experience as it is lived by those who experience it. According to Hultgren (1989), this method ñattends to the world as we

experience it in everyday lifeò (p. 46). Phenomenology is an interpretative methodology, meaning that knowledge is content dependent; there is a subject-subject relationship and the worldview of how knowledge is created rejects the notions that there is a single truth.

Early distinctions between human science, where phenomenology is situated, and natural science are often attributed to Wilhelm Dilthey. Smith (1983) recalled how Dilthey challenged the positivist school in the mid-18th century by referring to the study of culture as ñinseparably connected to our mindsò (p. 7), rather than to inanimate objects. Dilthey sought an alternative to describe human science as compared to a positivist natural science, such as biology, which tends to taxonomize natural phenomena. Van Manen (1997) clarified Diltheryôs theory when he suggested that natural science studies objects of nature, of things and the way objects behave, and human science studies beings that have consciousness, act purposefully, and illuminate expressions of how human beings exist in the world. Van Manen further quoted Dilthey (1976): ñWe explain nature, but human life we must understandò (p. 4).

Often called the father of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, a late 19th century trained mathematician, identified two pre-philosophical perceptions of the world according to Stewart and Mickunas (1990). They recounted how Husserl called the first of these perceptions, ñthe natural attitudeò (p. 24). This occurs when we just experience the world and do not think about it. The second is the scientific or theoretical attitude in which the scientist ñmust objectify the nature of his field of investigation and consider it as totally detached from all human concernsò (p. 25). A philosophy such as phenomenology begins when one begins to question the foundations of the world and

ñdemand a rational explanation for itò (p. 26). Phenomenology seeks to describe what we are conscious of by giving a rich description of an object or an account so the essence of objects and events perceived by human consciousness are made known. Phenomena can be the focus of anything of which one is conscious or intentional (Stewart & Mickunas, 1990).

Van Manen referred to Husserl (1970b) and Schutz and Lackunas, (1979) in describing a phenomenological research project as the study of the lifeworld. This begins in the lifeworld that is described as ñthe world as we immediately experience it pre-reflectively rather than as we conceptualize, categorize or reflect on itò (p. 9).

Husserl sought to reduce phenomena to their basics or essences, according to Stewart and Mickunas (1990), with a practice called phenomenological reduction. In phenomenological reduction one questions the meaning of the stated experience, suspends presuppositions you might have about the phenomenon (bracketing), and eliminates prejudices through a conscious effort to note and be self-aware. Gibson and Hanes (1993) supported this stance in describing how the essence of the phenomenon is different from a single experience. Zaner (1970) reported that a phenomenological description will bring out or make explicit that which is taken for granted. While there are many kinds of presuppositions, a sense of complete freedom from pre-supposition is impossible (Stewart and Mickunas 1990) for ñthe view that a philosophy without presuppositions is possible is itself a kind of presuppositionò (p. 7).

Stewart and Mickunas further recounted Husserlôs proposed change of attitude that he believed was necessary to describe phenomenological inquiry. Dahlberg et al.,

(2002) related that, according to Husserl (1970a) ñgoing to the things themselves means to do full justice to the everyday experience, to the lived experienceò (p. 44).

Challenges to Husserlôs approach were made by Heidegger, a student of Husserl, in *Being and Time* (1962). Explaining his view on the nature of being, existence, and reality, Heidegger believed that Husserl overlooked basic structural features of phenomena. Heidegger said that in the science of phenomena, ñwe must keep in mind that the expression ó*phenomenon*ô signifies ó*that which shows itself, in itself*ô, the manifestò (p. 51). This interpretive understanding has no conscious interferences and suspends the natural world. To explain, he used the metaphor of a disease, which shows itself as symptoms of the disease. A phenomenon looks or feels like the object of study. Heidegger (1962) suggested that features of the phenomenon are both the subject and the object of the experience but still are not directly observable.

Hultgrenôs (1989) approach to phenomenological research proposes to describe an experience from the point of view of the experience. In the process one hopes to achieve awareness of different ways of thinking and acting in search for new possibilities. McClelland (1999) described the need to gain a deep and sympathetic understanding of the human experience in order to make meaning of the experience. Some human scientists follow the approach of Husserl (1970b) and Heidegger (1962) by limiting the objective of the phenomenological inquiry to the descriptive essential structure of the phenomenon. They declined any attempt at interpretation.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Phenomenology attempts to make explicit and seek meaning within the experience by assuming a stance or approach within the process of research and describes

how one orients to lived experiences (van Manen 2001). He further described phenomenology (van Manen, 1997) as a ñsystematic attempt to uncover and describe the structures, and internal meaning structures of lived experienceò (p. 10).

Hermeneutic phenomenology uses text to go beyond the gaining of understanding to include interpretation of the text. Hermeneutics describes how one interprets the texts of life or, as in a study, interprets the text of the gathered data. As the researcher, I gathered data to create a text and interpreted the text offered by the participants who had the experience.

My Assumptions as a Researcher

In Chapter 1, I described my intersection with the topic. The reflection required to form this proposal revealed to me how I have acquired a deep and persistent interest in the topic of social entrepreneurship. It has touched my life in many ways, and I want to acknowledge its presence. I worked hard to make a place for this study in my life and am grateful for the support I have received.

As a researcher, my first assumption was that whoever has the experience under review can best describe the experience so others can gain greater understanding. Knowledge of the experience is gained through careful listening and exploration of the central question of what it is like to be a social entrepreneur.

My second assumption is that understanding the social entrepreneursô expressed or implied commitment to a social mission and entrepreneurial activity would benefit the community of learners and practitioners who have interest in the topic.

Third, I come to the topic with life and career experiences in the non-profit world and an understanding of entrepreneurship. This knowledge could potentially help others

who are interested in this path and could serve to disseminate knowledge more effectively. In learning what I can and communicating this to others through writing and teaching, I plan to serve academia at large and embrace opportunities to contribute my knowledge about this experience to the community.

Participant Selection

Polkinghorne (1989) suggested that the primary concern in participant selection in phenomenology is to generate a full range of variation to analyze the phenomenon. He further stated that a depth of experience is more important than selecting a specific number. According to Patton (1990), there is no magic number in qualitative research, but using purposeful selection has the potential to generate information rich cases and increase the insights, validity, and meaning as a result of the study

To begin the research, I identified 16 individuals who were called or named as a social entrepreneur through electronic communication on the Internet, such as a website, in print or personal awareness of their work through prior professional contact or described by others as social entrepreneurs through my networking experiences. As a screen, I also reviewed their experiences against the definition of social entrepreneurship developed by Dees (1987) and expanded by Peredo (2006),

In the pool were individuals who have been recognized publicly as social entrepreneurs in competitions, fitting the criteria because they had been nominated for awards or written about in public media. I learned as much as I could about them prior to the initial contact through the Internet, in reference material, and through networking conversations within the community.

The screening and selection process took on a new perspective as a result of two recommendations made by two members of my committee during the presentation of my proposal and in a subsequent meeting. The first recommendation was to develop my own definition of a social entrepreneur as a supplemental criterion to screen for appropriate participants. I developed the definition over two months by combining what I experienced as a human resource development professional, applying an action and outcome orientation, and integrating the experiences I had gained in teaching. I developed two versions, and the following, version, shorter and simpler, was affirmed by Dr. Sapienza, a member of my committee who serves as Chair of Entrepreneurial Studies at the Carlson School. The definition is ña social entrepreneur is committed to the design, development, and implementation of an enterprise, which, at its core, is the creation of value to benefit a specific social cause or mission.ò

I found that with this definition I could cross-check my selection strategies in order to assure that I would be interviewing individuals who had the experience of being a social entrepreneur. The definition was also useful at the conclusion of the theme verification process. Several times I received a comment such as, ñI like the core part--a social entrepreneur is not a company like Target who gives away money as part of their commitment to community. The commitment to the social mission is there at the beginning, at the founding.ò

The second recommendation was to ask the participants, who were potentially recognizable, if they would consent to have their name and their organization publicly recognized in the results of the research. They all agreed.

Participant Recruitment

The participants were initially invited to participate in the research via a telephone call. I extended 16 invitations, and 11 persons in 10 organizations agreed to participate. Four persons chose not to participate because of workload or family illness, and one person voiced a concern about disclosure that could potentially present barriers to business growth. If the participants expressed interest, I followed up with an email that restated the basic purpose of the study, the risks and benefits, a copy of the consent procedures, and the consent. The initial agreements to participate were made verbally or by email, and written consents were obtained at the interview, including the consent for disclosure of name and organization. Two of the individuals participated in a joint interview because they served as a co-leadership team. Given the limits of my geographical outreach to Minnesota and, primarily, the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul) metropolitan area, I set a goal to include as wide a variety of participants as possible to get maximum variation in gender, age, industry type, and ethnicity. The participants included six females and five males; two were persons of color.

The participants and their organizations are listed in alphabetical order in Table 1 with the title and role they held at the time of interview.

Table 1

Participants, Role and Organizations

Name	Role	Organization
Jacquie Berglund	CEO	Finneganôs Irish, Inc.
Laurie Brown	Founder & CEO	Restore Products
Tim Brownell	Co- President & CEO	Eureka Recycling
Dan Foley, M.D.	Vice-President, Medical Affairs	United Hospital
Doug Fenstermaker	Founder & Board Chair	Portico Health Net
Barbara Hensley	Founder & CEO	Hope Chest for Breast Cancer
Susan Hubbard	Co-President & Chief Strategy Officer	Eureka Recycling
Mary Matthews	President	Northeast Entrepreneur Fund
Hussein Samatar	Founder & Executive Director	African Development Center
Marnita Schroedl	Co-Founder & Social Capitalist	Marnitaôs Table
Laura Zabel	Executive Director	Springboard for the Arts

Weber (1986) emphasized the importance of the authenticity of the invitation. The respondents will want to know about the researcher and gain a sense of him or her, not just for what they might contribute to the project. To this point, I experienced relative ease of entry. I believe this was in part because, as part of my introduction, I shared my previous experience with entrepreneurs through my work and education.

IRB Process and Safeguards

After approval of the proposal, I submitted my application to the IRB and received approval. (See the attached invitation and letter in Appendix A and consent form in Appendix B.) The communication informed the potential research participants about the purpose of the study and any potential risks and benefits of participation. This included statements that I did not believe there were any significant risks to participation, and there were potential benefits in the participants learning more about the experience of being a social entrepreneur. The interviews were recorded, and private data that included name, organization and contact information that identified the participants at the time of invitation were coded by number. After consent for disclosure was obtained, the interviewees were identified by name. According to Kvale and Brinkman (2009), if information is published that is potentially recognizable by others, the participants will need to agree to the release of the information. This requirement was met because consent was given. The recordings were transcribed, the material coded for each participant, and all recordings and documents have been kept in a locked office file. Prior to the interviews, I created a narrative of my pre-understandings about the experience of social entrepreneurs. As Husserl suggested, bracketing guided me to suspend my beliefs in order to study the essential structures of the experience.

Data Gathering

All but two of the participants lived in the greater metropolitan area of the Twin Cities. I traveled to the location where they stated they would be most comfortable. The locations included participantsô offices; a public place, such as a library and restaurant; or at a home office. One organization had a shared leadership structure and the interview

was simultaneously conducted by telephone and in person. All of the interviews were taped and ranged in length from 55 minutes to two hours. The interviews were transcribed by a professional and provided to me securely in email files and a paper copy.

When conducting in-depth interviews, van Manen (1997) suggested that nothing about the experience (in this case, of the social entrepreneur) should be taken for granted. He posited that the phenomenological perspective is not only interested in the particular point of view of one individualôs experience, but the goal is to discern the essential themes. Through interviewing, a text is created, ñso when we analyze a phenomenon, we are trying to determine what the themes are, the experiential structures that make up that experienceò (p. 79).

Kvale (2009) asserted that an interview is literally an exchange of views between two persons and during the exchange of information, new knowledge is created. As stated previously, each potential participant received a letter of invitation and a follow-up call. Prior to the interview, I obtained background information on the participant so I could establish greater rapport. In the letter of introduction, I also included a short bio about myself so the interviewee had an opportunity to learn about me. The interview opened with a short dialogue with social amenities preceding any extended conversation. Robson (2002) described the background information as an important component of flexible interpretive design. The tape recorder was always checked at the beginning, which also provided an additional time for social chit-chat.

During the interviews, I found myself needing to work on being comfortable with silence. Van Manen (1997) described how ñout of this space of silence a more reflective response may ensue than if we try to fill the awkwardness of the silence with comments

or questions that amount to little more than chatterò (p. 112). This became easier to do and proved to be especially effective at the end of each interview. At the close of the interview, I consistently asked the question, ñIs there anything else that you wished we would have discussed about the experience of being a social entrepreneur or that we did not talk about?ò Typically, there was a long silence followed by a rich and detailed description of another, previously not stated, facet of the experience of living the life of a social entrepreneur, concerns about the future of the phenomenon, or additional information about their personal journey. It was most common at the conclusion for the interviewee to thank me for listening to their story, wishing me well, and expressing their desire to learn more about what will come of this work.

Weber (1990) described how the participants are engaged in a paradox. The participant is assured of confidentiality, if desired, yet what is shared greatly exposes the participant. Weber also suggested that, when trust is extended, the power becomes shared. As an example, while I directed the questions, the given response directed the next stage of the interview. If the interviewee withheld, the dialogue was stilted. Weber further suggested that, when both forget about the tape recorder, genuine dialogue occurs. This happened in all of the interviews in varying degrees.

I committed to van Manenôs (1997) direction to focus the questions on all aspects of the experience in order to gain the most material to create a rich and deep text. This included encouraging the use of anecdote to enrich the narrative. The interviews produced many detailed anecdotes and stories to illustrate the experiences. I continued the interviews, and a point of saturation seemed to occur during the seventh and eighth interviews. Saturation means that no new themes emerge across the data, but unique

experiences remained. The final three interviews had been scheduled and because of their unique featuresð one, a joint founder situation, and another where I learned during the interview that the entity had recently been closed in its current form--added to the uniqueness of the experience. I am glad that I did not stop because, even with those unusual situations, there proved to be common themes expressed.

Reflection

In describing hermeneutic phenomenology as a human science, Hultgren (1989) suggested that phenomenology offers distinctive features and dynamic interplay. This means adopting a stance to describe the meaning of subjectivity and objectivity. With conscious deliberation to follow van Manenôs guidance, I conducted a study that would seek to ñconstruct an animating, evocative description (text) of the human actions, behaviors, intentions, and experiencesò (p. 19) of social entrepreneurs. I accepted van Manenôs (1997) advice when he described objectivity to mean to be ñoriented to the object, that which stands in front of him or herò (p. 20) to attempt to remain true to the object. I identified my preconceptions and definitions and bracketed them with notes prior to the interview process.

While there are many definitions of social entrepreneurship, there was a point at which I stopped reading and reviewing the literature to enter the interview process with an open stance. Prior to each interview, I would sit quietly and reflect upon the upcoming meeting and appreciate the gift of time the participant had agreed to share. I also made a conscious mental commitment to stay open and responsive to the experience. Secondly, by adopting van Manenôs definition of subjectivity, I sought to be as ñperceptive, insightful, and discerning as one can be in order to show or disclose the

object in its full richness and in its greatest depthò (p. 20). This proved to be an important objective. Upon conclusion of the interview, I reflected on the powerful experiences that had been shared with me. At times, I was at a loss for words given the depth of the personal narratives that had been shared. An additional emotional component came as a surprise when most interviewees thanked me for the opportunity to share their perspectives and expressed a desire to stay in contact.

Establishing Credibility and Integrity Measures

Assuring rigor in qualitative research is different from applying positivistic standards of reliability and validity to a study. Because the assumptions and intent are different, empirical fact-checks and formulas are not the answer. Phenomenological texts point out structural features that point to something deeper that is hopefully the essence of the phenomena.

An important step in the process was to obtain intersubjective agreement with the participants. Van Manen (1997) suggested that, once the themes have been identified by the researcher, they form the basis of follow-up conversations with the participants to verify if the description is what the experience is really like. Experts such as Lincoln and Guba (1985) have identified terms such as credibility, transferability, and dependability as replacements.

The qualitative literature offers researchers several ways to assure the integrity of the data and the findings. Kvale (2009) describes dialogical subjectivity which ñrefers to agreement through rational discourse and reciprocal criticism between those interpreting a phenomenonò (p. 243). Establishing trust, assuring intersubjective agreement, and being clear and explicit about the processes provide a sound argument for a future knowledge

claim for qualitative paradigms. Polkinghorne asserted (1988) that reliability in a narrative study usually refers to the dependability of the data, while validity refers to the strength of the analysis. He also (1989) described that the trustworthiness of the findings are augmented by clear description of the participant selection process; the process used to collect the data, and how you formulate the responses. Creswell (2000) added that validity means how accurately the findings represent the participantsô perceptions. Because latitude exists in how one conducts a hermeneutic phenomenological study, the researcher needs to make the lens explicit through which the research is conducted. Creswell (2000) enumerated these examples: as the researcher, I was responsible for actively determining the length of the interview; when saturation of content has been attained; and validate through member checks or intersubjective agreement that the participantsô realities have been represented.

I worked to focus on the ñcredibility or trustworthiness of the researchò (Robeson, 2002 p.170) by not imposing a framework on what is happening, but rather let the data emerge from what I learned during the interviews and interpretation process. While Robson (2002) suggested that this does not preclude having a general framework against which to measure and assess, one needs to check on its appropriateness and modify any assessment as needed.

In order to assure the credibility and integrity of the project, I took several steps. Prior to the interview, I made a mental and physical checklist of my pre-suppositions in order to keep an open mind. I was mindful of the project schedule to allow enough time for the participant to respond and process the invitation. Once accepted, I spaced the interviews, leaving at least several days in between meetings to reflect on what I had

learned. I was clear and explicit about the research steps, including the recording and transcribing of texts. At the beginning of the interviews, I re-confirmed consent and at the close of the interview, I offered the opportunity for disclosure of name and organization. During the interview, I asked clarifying questions, responded to questions of me and used probes to gain more information. At the conclusion of each interview I explained the follow-up process and as stated previously, asked one last question regarding if there was anything else each participant thought would be helpful for me to know about the experience of being a social entrepreneur. I followed the prescribed IRB plan for securing and having the data transcribed and began the process of discerning themes. To gain intersubjective agreement, I followed up with written and verbal conversations and obtained feedback and verification. As stated previously, one of the most affirming experiences of the process was when at least three of the participants asked me if the identified themes were just about them as individuals.

Kvale (2009) likened the development of a competent researcher to the development of a fine craftsperson. The craft is honed in the process of investigating the phenomenon, checking the data, questioning when one is not certain or needs to clarify, and of interpreting and reporting what is learned through the inquiry process. Van Manen (1997) offered that there are no ñset of research practices that one can follow blindly. . . . The critical moments of inquiry are ultimately elusive to systematic explanationò (p. 34). I read this statement many times as at times I floundered, feeling mired in the hundreds of pages of data. In the craftsperson model, I was truly an apprentice, learning as I went and seeking the guidance of my advisor.

Interpreting the Data

While the description of an experience by a participant (van Manen, 1997) is nothing like the experience itself, obtaining a rich text of the description become the materials on which one can work. Describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting to describe the essential themes is complex, but in the end, best simply and clearly described. Van Manen helped us understand the importance of living as close to the experience as possible and believed that writing itself is a critical component of the research.

To uncover the themes, I first read each transcribed text at least twice in its entirety in order to grasp the totality of expression, and to familiarize myself with the experience as communicated. I then used the highlighting approach suggested by van Manen (1997) to set apart pre-reflectively made statements that appeared to be particularly meaningful, expressed a stated feeling or one that revealed something to the participant about the self. Many of these highlighted statements became the basis for the themes that were inherent in the experience.

Developing themes was a lengthy process and required three iterations. I added brief narrative phrases beside the transcribed text and added notations regarding any significant non-verbal expressions made during the interview. After reviewing the highlighted statements made by each participant, I clustered like statements made by each person into several categories by creating a large table format that required my writing key components of the highlighted the statements from each participant. Writing their words in longhand on a large grid gave me both a visual picture of statements across their continuum of experience, and it helped me to connect to the words in which they

described their experience in a more personal way. This process also helped me begin to define the categories of themes that had not yet been determined.

Van Manen (1997) described this dialogical process of going back and forth between the parts and the whole. Barrit, Beekman, Bleeker and Mulderij (1984) contended that, when you read the descriptions, you should select the moments that seem to be the center of the event for the person. They suggest that these moments ñfly up like sparks from the descritionò (p. 6). Van Manen reports that themes ñare more like knots in our webs of experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through as meaningful wholesò (p. 90).

In the early stages of theme development, I got bogged down with non-essential statements; I affixed quick and easy labels and tended to choose terms that were quite specific. To determine what themes were essential, I asked myself, ñIs the phenomenon still the same if I imagine a change or delete this theme from the phenomenon?ò During the process, I differentiated between incidental and essential themes and used free imaginative variation to generate these essential themes. Essential themes make a phenomenon what it is and without which it could not be what it is. As I became more familiar with the data over several weeks, three major categories of themes appeared to emerge. They also seemed to arrange themselves into an understandable architecture that could be reflected back to the participants.

The categories were the origins of social entrepreneurship for the individual; themes related to living the life of a social entrepreneur; and themes related to looking forward. As I later reviewed them, the initial themes I proposed had no ordering, were either very vague, too specific, or had been influenced by a pre-conceived notion. One

example of this is: The description of what became a theme called ñthe role is demanding and complex,ò I had initially called ñstress and exhaustion.ò Another example includes an initial theme of ñcollaborations and partnershipsò became ñinteraction with outside enterprisesò with three distinct sub-themes of connecting, collaborating, and challenging. Tesch (1987) called these major themes ñmeta-themesò (p. 231), which are the essence of the phenomenon, while unique themes (or non-essential themes) reflected the individuality of the respondent. It was essential to maintain a strong orientation to the phenomenon was essential and required constant openness. The data I gathered became my constant companion as Tesch suggested and proved to be true. I would often wake up re-thinking and re-categorizing the themes to get as close to the essence as I could. The insights that you gather, according to Tesch (1987), come when you least expect them. I recall sitting late at the dining room table and moving around again and again the varied color-coded text pages, and new categories appeared. I had struggled in continuing to work with the data over several weeks. As I reflected, when the three major categories of themes eventually emerged, they seemed logical and simple and were reminiscent of van Manenôs (1997) description of writing and re-writing. He said, ñAnd this took you that long to write, you say? After seven drafts!?!ò (p. 8).

Theme Verification Process

During the theme verification process, I used a two-step process. I first sent an explanatory email to each participant describing the overall theme categories and preliminary themes derived from the content of what I had learned in all of the interviews. This included the major themes and sub-themes. I also included my definition

of a social entrepreneur for their review. I followed up with a pre-scheduled telephone call and used a written guide and made notations. A telephone meeting of 20 to 30 minutes was held with all but one of the respondents. The remaining respondent and I communicated over email. During the phone calls, we reviewed the themes, made adjustments to the language, and in several cases noted that an occasional sub-theme did not match that participantôs experience. The more familiar I became with the themes as I recorded the experiences of the participants, the more the text and themes appeared to collapse into representative categories with language that represented the experiences most accurately.

I also received several non-anticipated verification statements during the discussion. For example, I was asked, ñNow Jeanne, when I am reading these themes, and we are talking about them, these are the themes that you identified from just what I was telling you, correct?ò When I explained that these were themes developed from the cumulative interviews, several times the participants expressed surprise and made comments such as ñamazingò or ñthere really is something like a social entrepreneurò or ñI thought you were just talking about me.ò On a professional level, these responses gave me greater confidence that I had gotten close to being able to describe the experience of a social entrepreneur. On a personal level, these comments evoked a powerful response and frankly gave me "goose bumps.ò Months later, when I recounted the conversations, I had the same response.

At the end of the verification discussion, I also asked the participants to provide feedback on my definition of social entrepreneurship, developed prior to their interview. I asked if the definition made sense to them and if it generally described their experience

on a scale of one to five with five being high agreement. Seven participants responded with high agreement, (five) with the remainder answering four or did not rate. They offered specific suggestions about how they believed the definition could be improved. This will be discussed briefly in the conclusion.

The information also presented non-essential themes of gender perspective, referenced by four participants. Subject to the test of imaginative variation, this appeared not essential to the phenomenon, but it will be addressed in my conclusions. The eight major themes within the three categories revealed 10 sub-themes as follows:

Themes related to origins of social entrepreneurship

Personal experience as preparation

Impactful events and scenarios

Awareness of community need

Vision of what would be different if a change was made

Self-knowledge

Tolerance for risk and challenge

Action orientation

Themes related to living the life of a social entrepreneur

Structuring the entity

Integration of business and social principles

Personal engagement and commitment

Defining Moments

Role is demanding and complex

Relationship Aspects

Dealing with Uncertainty

Interaction with outside enterprises

Connecting

Collaborating

Challenging

Themes related to looking forward

Leadership awareness

Aspects of team and role changes

Sustainability

Summary

This chapter described the methodology, methods, and my assumptions as a researcher. Using van Manenôs (1997) approach to structuring human science research, I used hermeneutic phenomenology to research the question, ñwhat is it like to be a social entrepreneur?ò Eleven participants representing 10 organizations participated in in-depth interviews and also gave consent for their participation to be made known. I created a text from the recorded interviews and developed preliminary themes that were reviewed with the participants.

The themes were difficult to discern at first and required several iterations. Once I was able to identify a structure or order using a life cycle approach, the themes emerged. I used a highlighting approach supplemented by color coded flags to help discern the appropriate categories for the themes and subthemes. The themes were categorized into three sections: origins of social entrepreneurship; living the life of a social entrepreneur; and looking forward. I obtained verification of the themes categories and made needed

modification in the themes and sub themes with eight themes and 13 subthemes represented. There was strong resonance for several themes with all participants providing verification. These are examples: personal experience; community need; interaction; leadership and personal engagement. All members participated in the follow-up and in addition, I was able to test their reaction to the authenticity of the definition of social entrepreneurship, for which I received strong support. A follow-up literature review included the disciplines of social entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship, HRD and leadership.

CHAPTER 4

THEMES RELATED TO THE ORIGINS OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENERSHIP

This is the first of three chapters that present the findings of this study. There are two primary themes related to the origins of social entrepreneurship that emerged from the experiences shared by the social entrepreneurs: personal experiences and self-knowledge.

Personal Experience as Preparation

The social entrepreneurs recounted personal experiences and events that prepared them for the work of social entrepreneurship. The genesis of the personal experiences occurred during childhood, within the context of their families of origin; or later within their relationships with others; or as a result of their career choices, aspirations, or failures. The sub-themes of personal experiences included impact of an event or experience; awareness of a community or societal need; and envisioning what would happen if a change was made.

Jacquie recounted how transition experiences prepared her for the role:

> And hereôs a piece where making a difference comes in because my masterôs thesis was on the effectiveness of economic development. We were looking at all the aid that flows from the wealthy countries going to the poor, and looking at how effectively the money was being used or not. I did a case study on Kenya and it focused on how they put their money in human resources. I was looking at all the aid . . . I saw where money and investment worked when you invested the capital in the people, and when you train them to help themselves. I was at the

> policy level, and I saw the real stuff getting done in the field . . . the real grass roots organizations were getting stuff done.

She continued by describing how connections are an important part of preparation:

> My journey is also about the importance of connections. I have always kept in touch with people, so when I came back to Minnesota, a friend offered me job that was with a pub, and I needed back surgery. . . . I could work from home. After a few years we developed a beer.

Mary shared several perspectives on how preparation prepared her to recognize opportunity.

> So at every stage, Iôve used my experiences as sort of a frame for what we would do next. It just sort of evolved and the more confident I feel, the more creative and the more opportunities there are. . . . There was the day in which we really started to build. I saw the funding opportunity for Kellogg. I knew what they wanted, and it was like everything Iôd done in my life, and even all the work with the entrepreneur fund had brought me to a place where I could do this, and I knew it was ours to do. I knew enough at the moment that this was something that would make a difference.

Doug commented on both his intention and his experience as preparation in the following ways:

> I actually got into health care because I had a personal interest in doing something for the community. What I found out was that health care was the best of both worlds from a business perspective. It is a challenging, complex business

enterprise, and you had to keep your wits about you to be successful from a business point of view. It was an industry then, when I tried it, that wasn't very strong in business talent. A recruiter called and told me about a job at a hospital system. The recruiter said they are good people but they need your business talent. An investment banker told me you're crazy--you're going to be a big hero out there or you're going to take a hospital, the first hospital system in the country, through a bankruptcy. . . they had three days of cash. The turn around consultant had left and said we were going to lose twenty one million the next year. By August, we had made $3 million and had money in reserves. It was huge deal, and now the good news about that is that for the rest of my career, I could get away with murder! (laughs)

Barbara talked about her preparation for being a social entrepreneur:

My feeling about social entrepreneurship is that there are so many people who would love to be making a difference . . . but they may be risk averse, they may not have the creativity. They may not have the gift that was given to me of twenty-five years of business experience and you know . . . buying and selling companies and an understanding of P and L. . . . From the very beginning it was very important for me to have a business focus; it was very important for us to have a business challenge. Someone asked me, why do you need to make money? And I said, because you know, this is now my livelihood. . . . It is important to have the opportunities to make some money doing this, because I'm not independently wealthy, and I'm going to live a long time.

Dan talked about his varied physician experiences as preparation for being a social entrepreneur:

> I guess that there's different parts of my life where, you know, I sort of think I have had like five different careers that sort of meshed together. . . . Whether it is being part of the military, the army with the Minnesota National Guard that even overlapped with my emergency medicine, and then the medical transportation. And as a flight surgeon that deals with the issues such as the goings on at Camp Ripley, and that relates to what's going on the community. There are some things that are quite obvious to a clinician that should be done. And now having spent enough years in medical administration, I know that you have to build a business case. I have been fortunate in one sense of having been in multiple worlds.

Tim as a co-leader, spoke about preparation for social entrepreneurship or lack of it, in the following way:

> I never thought of myself as a social entrepreneur; I was fascinated by the challenge of it and equally frustrated by the existing paradigm . . . and these two things fitting together was what really the driving force is, that at least for me in getting started. It's both the challenge and the need, together, where they intersect. . . . There is this opportunity for self-engagement. I mean there is this marrying of those two parts of the self . . . the challenge is just that blinding need to do it. These two things, personally for me, are compelling.

Impactful Events and Scenarios

Jacquie shared the following personal experience:

> When I was in college, I know that I wanted to leave the world a better place than when I got here . . . I remember reading a *Time* magazine article that they had interviewed 80 or 90-year-old people and asked them at the end of their lives if there was one thing they would change. They said they wished they had taken more risks . . . . I cut that article out and put it above my bed at college and made up my mind right there I am going to take risks, and I want to make a difference.

Barbara had the following personal experience with her family members:

Hussein worked as a loan officer serving a wide variety of clients and described the following situations that personally and professionally impacted him:

> When I was a banker, somebodyôs going to come and say they need a loan from the bank. I have to explain to them how, if they have been in business, do they have the tax returns, do they have the financial statements, and do they have an accountant? They will say no, no, no, no and, as you know, that bank has to be very careful. . . . Even people who have been in the United States for a long time; itôs very difficult for them to understand that banks only finance people who donôt need the money.

As Laura shared her perspectives about what it was like to be a social entrepreneur, she took pause at one point and seemed to gain a perspective of her own origins of the experience:

> I have a background as an artist, as a theater artist, as a writer, and had worked for a number of arts organizations, and Iôve always been interested in sort of the intersection between the arts community and community organizing. . . . It all sounds very purposeful when I say it now (pauses and laughs), but at the time I

> didnôt think it was a goal. . . . When I applied for the job, I really didnôt know what I was getting into, other than I had this sense of doing something on behalf of the whole arts community, and this interest involved artists in other aspects of the community and not keeping them siloed.

The personal experiences of the interviewees were often described as important factors impacting their future work as social entrepreneurs. Mary described the following:

> I was a small business owner in the late 70ôs and I didnôt do very well. I had fun, I was doing the kind of business I would have wanted to do, but it was at the end of the business cycle . . . I was not a good businessperson. Probably the worst moment in the experience was, we were part of a buying group, and I had a triple pay [all due on the same date] on all of my bills, and one day I got called before the head of the buying group, and they basically told me I was in over my head . . . I donôt remember exactly what they said, but they were putting me on probation. I was absolutely crushed that they could confront me. . . . I later sold the business. I learned a lot about what I didnôt know and what I hadnôt asked myself at the time. I didnôt have a business plan or understand the financials.

Jacquie described that the mission of her organization was ñall about alleviating poverty.ò She related personal experiences in her early life and as a volunteer that affected her life work:

> My parents and I were very poor when my sister and I were little. My dad was a janitor and my mom was a waitress. They worked very hard, and my dad went back to school full time; worked full time. My mom worked full time; it was like

a revolving door these two. They did well and we moved economic classes. I was able to see that change, but I remember what it was like to be very poor. And it was like not being able to afford to go to church camping trips or, not being able to do the things I wanted, because we didnôt have money. So, all my friends were rich, and that was really hard for me. Itôs like why canôt I . . . why am I not in ski club?

Barbara shared the following:

This is the legacy for my sisters and my mother and to everyone who has been touched by breast cancer, and we have lost to breast cancer. This is their legacy. . . . This is just sharing the story and having people come up afterwards and sharing their story. You know like ï ñI lost my mom to breast cancer. Iôm so glad you are doing this.ò

Marnita relayed a perspective in her life as a youngster, teen, and professional that related to personal impact, awareness of need, and her own preparation:

So I came to do this work, well, in some ways, I do not know. If you read Malcolm Gladwellôs book, *Outliers*, I have 10,000 hours of experience in some very unique modalities. I was a foster child. I came up in the foster care system and grew up as a child outside, outside and always wanted to belong. And so when you spend 10,000 hours being bullied and being outside and picked on, you have a lot of time to reflect on what it looks like . . . and I had 10,000 hours of time as a senior executive in communications. So one of the things that often happened, I would be a woman sitting in a room, as the only person under the age of fifty; the only person who was a woman, and the only person who was of color.

> Because I had been adopted and raised by a white family and had really been raised outside my culture. . . . I would get hostility from blacks, and it formed a deep philosophical underpinning about any group and how any group actually hates the other group. It doesn't matter what the dominant culture is. So I had 10,000 hours to reflect on this.

Tim relayed his growing up experiences and activities as a young professional that had an early impact on his work as a social entrepreneur:

> Sometimes it's just like falling forward. I grew up, in particular, with a mother who was, um, a tightwad. And so that's a self-described tightwad, and she'd honor that title. She's fiscally prudent, and we were reusing things, reusing all the time. And it did funny things; we collected newspaper in a VW bus with my brother, and it was gas money for him. I just enjoyed being with my elder brother and being paid in peanut M&Ms. . . . It wasn't something I valued at the time; I really felt awkward about it. . . . Frankly, it was weird carrying home my brown paper bags with me from lunch. . . . I can remember distinct moments. I'd been working carpentry in New York City and doing renovations and seeing all this waste that we were pulling out . . . a kitchen and bathrooms that were just installed two years before. So looking at the cabinets and thinking, my god, why are these people pulling these out? . . . That was getting more disturbing to me. I was along the coast of Turkey and seeing these beautiful coastlines and dumping garbage in valleys that cascaded to the ocean. . . . About the same time, garbage barges started off the coast of New York. So these all came together, and I

realized something was calling me, and I went out to California and happened to get in the business of recycling.

For Laurie, the impact of her brotherôs illness and her work for the mentally ill became part of her experience as a social entrepreneur. She commented:

> My first job out of Macalester was lobbying for the mentally ill. I was trying to change the world then. . . . I was putting my leverage toward efforts where I felt there was the least power. My brother suffered, suffers, from schizophrenia and so that really drove me. One, I knew what both the private sector and the public services had to offer. I thought, oh, my God, thereôs nothing. This is just a terrible life ahead for him. . . . I did more research and started to think with a group of people. I was a founding member of an organization called the Mental Health Advocates Coalition. . . . Nobody then really saw the earth as having value, that it wasnôt really represented. It was more like a victim, and in my mind, it was similar to the mentally ill.

Awareness of Community Need

Participants often described situations in which the personal experiences gained within their individual situations, including family, employment, career choice, work assignments, and education helped them become aware of a community need.

Dan stated:

> What you said (social entrepreneurship) is basically looking at what the issues are. . . . When I think of community, I try and think of the community as one that you can get your arms around. Then you have the greater community where we could influence by the things we did through the clinic. . . . One of the local issues

down by the clinic was the brewery. . . . Then itôs a public health issue. When the brewery was actually acting as a refinery making ethanol in a form but not having the environmental controls on it. That was a local community issue that the hospital and the clinic were able to weigh in on and eventually got that closed down. But it wasnôt the right place to be making ethanol as opposed to brewing beer.

He offered another example:

In 1985, I was appointed to the Pollution Control Board by [Governor] Perpich, and Iôve been there ever since. So if you take the knowledge I was gaining, relative to what was happening with growth of the Twin Cities that the pollution control had to deal with. . . . Like transportation issues because they produce pollution and waste water treatment options. So I tell people, my wife sees houses, and I see sewer connections because that is part of the whole infrastructure. I started to think about what are these people going to need--theyôre going to need clinics and how are we gonna get the doctors and nurses to be able to do this? Back when I was an emergency doctor, part of what I saw was that you need more defined connections between clinics and the hospital. . . . I could see communities growing and decided we have got to have a vehicle for producing family doctors for the local community in the inner city and for which none of the other residencies were training for.

Laurie commented on her awareness of the communitiesô need for a healthy earth. She shared:

> It just seemed that nobody really saw the earth as having value, that it wasnôt represented; it was more like a victim. . . . If we did things that were good for the earth, everything we did would be healthy for humans as well. . . . I believe that in consumers thereôs an innate desire within people to do the right thing. And they donôt know how. . . . All of the plastic in the ocean now. They say there are five gyre [large system of rotating ocean currents] of plastic which is twice the size of Texas, how does that happen?

As a finance professional, Doug shared his awareness of a community need; access to health care:

> I had been in healthcare for about 10 or 12 years before being in the finance area where I saw access to health care in hospitals and doctors as a serious problem. And the problem is that it creates the most expensive something, in a place [hospital], that the cost of care is the most expensive part. . . . Eighteen years ago this was a problem that nobody seemed able to solve, and they still canôt. Twenty years later the federal government is struggling with the issue and so is the state. This takes on an issue that is really intractable--access to health care, and I said thereôs gotta be a better way to solve this problem. . . . It occurs to me that if you looked at access to healthcare in the hospitals and the doctors, this is a serious problem. . . . The reason is that the population is not maintained in healthcare . . . so they use the emergency room like a primary care clinic, and then when they are very sick, they go into the hospital, and it costs a lot, and they have no money to pay. On one side are the people who have insurance, and on the other side are government constituents. Who are in the middle are the people who fall through

> the cracks. If you could fix the middle, you could create universal coverage and drive down the cost of care.

Marnita shared her experience of cooking and hospitality, identifying a community need for authentic and focused conversation to solve community problems:

> Everybody in my community always came in the back door and sat in my kitchen while I cooked . . . the teenagers came in and said they were suicidal-- and I would cook for them something and we would cook in the kitchen together. My back door was always open to everyone. Something came back to me because I was always outside. I never wanted to make anyone feel unwelcome. . . . We have been doing that, in fact. When people like each other, when they feel they have some fluency in relationship, they had what they needed to kind of overcome the things that they donôt understand about each other. . . . We are bringing people who really have a need to bridge race, class and culture, who donôt just want to be in a room anymore and just talk about it.

Mary described being at a creativity retreat with a nationally known author and shared one example of community need:

> We went up the road to a retreat for a couple of days and we were talking about creativity and art, and so I walked into the gift shop, like I usually do, and it was a brand new resort. It only had been open for a couple of months and they had lovely things. So in one room we were talking about art and creativity and, thirty feet away is this gift shop and there is nothing in there from Minnesota. So I went to the owner and asked ñwhyò? They said it was too hard to connect buyers and sellers and we didnôt have the time.

Susan shared a longstanding awareness for the community to respond to the issue of waste:

> I really believed that at the end of the day people could die because of this stuff [waste] is handled the wrong way, it creates things that kill beings . . . all beings not just people. I was trying to tell people around what was going to happen, and they couldn't hear it for whatever reason.

Barbara described a gap in services that pointed to a community need in support of women who have breast cancer.

> I needed to make a huge difference in my cause in breast cancer, in helping underserved women who were experiencing this disease. . . . Every time I turned around there was some reminder of where our money is going and what we were doing to help these women and how desperate they were for the things that the government and the State is not gonna take care of . . . they may pay for their chemo somehow or another because of the nature of the way our hospitals are established, but they can't help them stay in their home.

Jacquie commented with additional experience:

> When I did a lot of volunteering at St Stephen's, I saw that a lot of these homeless guys worked full time. They would get up at 3 am in the morning and take a bus and go out to a factory in some suburb, and there was an affordable housing crisis, and these guys couldn't meet their basic needs. We're the wealthiest country in the world and people are working seven days a week and not meeting their basic needs. There's a problem. That motivated me on this deal.

Vision of What Could be Different if the Change Was Made

In recounting experiences of what it was like to be a social entrepreneur, participants often commented they could envision what would be different if change was made to address community and societal needs.

Laurie talked about the initial vision of Restore the Earth:

> Restore the Earth looked at retail first--the earth store. How I could shift the concept that is very good at educating people and shift it to a new way to bring new environmental products to market . . . how could we shift the paradigm essentially to get people to reuse the bottles versus discarding them. If we did things that were good for the earth, everything we did would be health for humans as well.

Mary shared what could be different if a change was made in her region on the business of art:

> The focus was to connect buyers and sellers. . . . So what we did was the simplest strategy is to get everybody in a room and connect the buyers and sellers. We had a wholesale market at the Holiday Inn, and there were 41 sellers and over one hundred buyers. . . . If you can move beyond one-ups [single sales] and figure out what of your work you can reproduce, you can drive your income. The more skilled the person is, the more skilled they are as a business owner. Everything we do is geared to how to help the individual entrepreneur be successful, and thatôs the number one thing that we try and drive for. . . . So the person is first and the business is second. . . . Itôs driven at how we help that person maximize their potential. . . . We do that through business planning, finance and coaching.

Based on his experience as a banker, Hussein shared the following about what could be different:

> I really felt the wealth in this county is created in the private sector. I feel that, I believe that. But I also believe that the private sector doesnôt take time in the market. What I saw were people who could be bankable but you really donôt have time to hold their hand through the process. . . . So I felt the community was not getting what they need. . . . I saw a need and thatôs what I felt, and left the bank to establish this organization. We do business development--thatôs planning, lending and technical assistance; we do first time home buyer training and financial education. . . . We will help people who are willing to work for wealth creation. They claim the wealth for themselves.

Self-knowledge

The participants often described awareness of their personal characteristics, offering a knowledge of self that seemed to support the origins of their work as social entrepreneurs. This self-knowledge was disclosed by describing situations in which they knew their limits and desires, how they functioned, and what they needed to do to make their concept a reality. Sometimes they described this as being confined by an outside structure, dissatisfaction with the current state, and a need to create something new. They were able to offer specific structures or processes they would use, and the importance of integrating business and social principles.

Susan shared:

> I would define social entrepreneur as somebody who canôt work for anybody else. Sort of has the calling, really. An undeniable calling that goes beyond just them. .

> . . Thereôs something that is calling them thatôs not currently available so they have to create it. . . . Itôs going to be a greater benefit than to just them. A lot of times social entrepreneurs want to change the current paradigm through what they are doing, but they recognize that as the measurement of what ever the world measures things, it doesnôt work for the work of social entrepreneurship.

Mary is an accomplished quilter and used a recent piece of work that she had completed to describe her work, her business structure and herself:

> So we look for ways to generate money in order to be able to accomplish our work. Our revenue comes from grants, from government contracts, from fee for service, and we cobble together that to run on an ongoing basis and try and be helpful to more and more people all the time. On this table thereôs this quilt. It (the fund) is a lot like this quilt from a variety of perspectives, from two perspectives. One is that this is fascinating. There is an orderly plan at the base of this. . . . I cut out little squares, they went together as a pattern, and the fabric was especially picked out so they would go together. Itôs a planned orderly structure, but the quilting stitches, stippling, which is free hand random, yet at its finest, it never overlaps but it does sometimes, because this is not perfect. So there is an element that is very planned and orderly, but there is a fluidity and flexibility, a sort of free spirit that being a social entrepreneur allows me to do.

Barbara described aspects of her organization that reflect her knowledge of self. She shared:

> So from the very beginning, we were, it was a social entrepreneurial business. I had researched the approach to business and I had looked at how I can make a

> difference in breast cancer. I figured out and I know from my own personality and persona, and the fact that I'm not independently wealthy, I knew I would not be content running a foundation out of my home and raising money for breast cancer. I might be good at it, but I wouldnôt be content because it wouldnôt have that business challenge.

Jacquie described her experience in the international economic development sector pointing out two work environments which informed her knowledge of self:

> What I learned at the policy level, like we were not making an impact . . . I saw the real stuff getting done in the field. I also learned I was an entrepreneur and that the government structure bureaucracy did not suit me at all.

As a finance executive, Doug shared an awareness of how he broadly looks and thinks about issues, and how that has affected his work:

> (Itôs) at least in my genes . . . I am finance in my nature, but I also do some left brain thinking in regard to the social aspect to it. But I can also connect the dots. . . . I have the numbers and I can go into a little story and tell the CFOs, if you can do this on a broad scale . . .

Marnita talked about the importance of practice in her life, and connecting it to her knowledge of self:

> I practice what I do so itôs not a natural. . . . I was actually outside, and so what I did was practice being nice to people, I worked at being warm and making eye contact . . . Iôve practiced losing weight, and I practiced to become a dancer . . . I think almost everything is my life is a practice. I was naturally endowed with a

> rapid facilitation process, and in one way that was great because if I walk into a social situation, I can see the layout . . . like a big board lights up in my head.
>
> I was a back kid on rural upstate Washington, where they didn't think I was going to do anything or be anything. They didn't see me that way. Leadership did not look like me, beauty did not look like me, and so these are the things I feel I can really speak to very powerfully.

Tolerance for Risk and Challenge

The participants frequently made statements that referred to risk and challenge, sometimes specifically using these terms. Jacquie described:

> Well just last year, the year of 2010, is probably one of my biggest risks. We had a goal of hitting a 1,000,000 [dollars] in revenue last year, and that would be 50% growth. And my accountant at the time said no, we've got to be reasonable, let's do 15% growth. Well, I ignored my accountant and said that I'm going to spend, and were going do a 1,000,000 [dollars] or we're never going to get there . . . so I hired a full-time VP of Sales. It was like, build it and they will come. Bring 'em on and we will sell, and it was the smartest thing I ever did.

Mary likened the work of being a social entrepreneur to challenges of being a business owner:

> It's like being any kind of business owner . . . awake at night and worry and wonder if I'm going to be able to make payroll. . . . There was a point where I said to myself, were having an impact and we will figure out the money on the other end, so we just keep doing what we were doing, and [we] had a great

impact. . I worry about it less than I used to, and I have strong faith that were doing what we are suppose to be doing and it will work out.

Hussein offered a perspective of risk in saying:

You should keep in mind that nothing is guaranteed. But that itôs going to work out. You definitely can not be afraid to fail. And if you are afraid to fail, this is not the line of business that you need to be in.

Doug shared his personal assessment of challenge and risk:

So Iôm kind of a driven person you know, and I like the challenge. I like it when people say, hey you canôt do that. And I say, yeah . . . so I like that and then I really try and figure out a creative way to overcome that particular challenge. . . . Like, well, I donôt know how to do this. Well let me think about it for a little bit. And then, usually I come up with something out of my experience or ideas, or something that I can make it work that can either address the issue, or overcome it-overcome the challenge. And so, itôs pretty exciting.

Laura described coming into a new role that seemed to foster risk and challenge. She commented:

They were looking for someone who wasnôt going to do things the way that theyôd always been done, and the way they were supposed to be done. And they ended up with someone who didnôt do things the way they were supposed to be done, or the way theyôd always been done, because I had no idea how they were supposed to be done. . . . It wasnôt like I didnôt know what the rules were. So I kind of was making them up as I went along.

She later described the challenge in the following way:

> We definitely have days where I feel; well we have this phrase thatôs sort of become our mantra at Springboard which is, ñthrills undaunted" (laughs) which is something that one of our staff coined after looking at our annual plan in a meeting once.

Marnita shared a perception of risk and challenge that is ever-present for her and her family, as she noted:

> Itôs scary I realize, I mean like every month we manage a budget of three-hundred thousand dollars, and we go through a period we are expecting money to come in . . . I took a lot of risk for this. I mean, we have been flying without a net for five years. We just never know, and had no inherited wealth or anything.

Susan described a perspective of risk and challenge, as she recalled a defining moment for the organization:

> I always look for every other out, because I think itôs going to take a pound of flesh but not just from me, but all the people I love. Itôs my family, really I have a family, but also really the Eureka family there, so itôs like, Iôm going to look at it another way. Something first came to me . . . that Iôm very risk averse for other people . . . and I guess, you know, money doesnôt really mean that much to me. That makes me a little bit at risk here, but it means a lot to other people and their jobs. Itôs a recognition that you know with your self. Itôs that moment in you life. It isnôt necessarily ówhoo whooô but it's like you feel itôs recognizing whatôs true about yourself and about the situation. . . . I think itôs easier to have a certain mentality at a certain age . . . and like them, now Iôm seeing the future. Itôs like weôve been in this industry, and itôs been so hunkered down in the past. . . . The

> fact that is hunkered down was, well, it just kind of hurt, it was going to create pollution and pain and sickness. We used to say at the end of the day, at work you know, when we are launching this thing, we were all insane and we thought . . . you gotta cut bait.

Tim offered the following statements that described the power of the challenge before them:

> We had countless conversations at her [Susanôs] desk in St. Paul, in which we know what we had to do, we knew we tried and tried not to . . . tried to see other ways we could get this done. We realized we had to step into the void when no one, no one either understood the issue or their vested interest keeps them away from filling the space, that we knew had to move into.

Laurie described the day she opened the store and how she approached a challenge:

> I'll never forget when I opened the store; I ordered fifteen, 55-gallon drums. I never sold in all my years as much product as I bought. I didnôt worry about how we were going to get the drums moved . . . and get [the product] out of the drums. That is something that entrepreneurs do . . . they just jump ahead, and they throw their hat over the fence and say, I am going to do this, and they worry about how theyôre going do it later.

Action Orientation

The participants described situations where taking action, undertaking the next step, achieve results or making forward movement, was an important part of their life as a social entrepreneur.

Dan revealed three different approaches to action based on his experience, training and role:

> As an emergency doctor, Iôm used to immediate cause and effect, to immediate gratification, you know, you see something, you write an order, make an intervention, and see it happen. As a medical administrator, you plant a seed, you create a plan, you try and see what the future value is, you try to articulate that and try to figure out what is the time frame for that seed to grow on to whatever the particular plan is, and it takes a along time.

Hussein passes on his action orientation to staff as they work with clients:

> When I meet with them [the staff] . . . I say, letôs listen carefully to the stories the potential clients are telling you. Have they written a business plan, whatôs the legal structure? We ask for a fairly early commitment. We have a business planning class and about 80 or 85 people sign up. In the end, we end up financing less than 10 of them. . . . I really feel that people who are willing to come back . . . who are really willing to reflect on their experiences and think through, even though its not what they want to hear at the beginning, to go back and do it again and again they will be successful. This is the people we will fund.

Doug placed importance on sharing his orientation to action with others to accomplish his goal:

> Itôs surprising to me . . . we have been able to survive for 15 years, and grow and really do well and expand. With something that was little more than an idea, you know, I didnôt do it all by myself. I mean I came up with the idea, but I convinced these other people that this was really an important social thing to do . . . it was

never going to amount to anything unless it could do something that was really different, which was to have all the competitive components of health care in the Twin Cities come together and do something in a non-competitive way.

Barbara commented about the importance of action:

I mean, we have a great working environment here, in all of our stores I think. But it drives me bananas when I see people sitting around and not working, because its this work ethic Iôveôgot, but also we have tons to do. This is a fast moving business, and so these days are very difficult for me. I've been fortunate to surround myself with people that are good at the things I am not good at . . . so when I see things that are not working, I just cringe because the entrepreneurial side of me is saying . . . this isnôt doing what it is supposed to be doing.

She later described participating in networks and conventions of social entrepreneurs, and shared the following:

I went to some of the meetings . . . they were more big picture discussions, and it didnôt fulfill a need for me. The discussions are fantastic, but they were a lot of theory and I wanted action.

Marnita offered a metaphor, pointing to her knowledge of self and the importance of action:

I was very impacted at the General Mills breakfast. This woman got up and spoke a couple of years ago. Sheôs kind of amazing. She was talking about the momma elephants . . . when a river gets too high, the big elephants, the bulls and the mommas go into the water. And they wade in and they stand shoulder to shoulder, and they hold the river back for the little elephants to go behind. I want to be one

> of those momma elephants holding the river back. You know, we have some stuff going on, we need some momma elephants that are willing to stand in the damn river and not be swept away by craziness, not be swept away.

Summary

In this chapter, I explained the themes and subthemes that formed the origins of the participantsô experience as social entrepreneurs. The participants described how they were often personally impacted by an event or experience that had lasting impact on the future life work. For some it was the growing up experience, events with friends or family, values communicated by parents, or their experience with a topic that had significant meaning for them.

These personal experiences brought to their awareness a particular community need that they sensed from their living within a community, or brought to their attention by a life experience. The community needs could be described as opportunities for system improvements for individuals, groups, or communities, or a shift in thinking about how one approaches a particular topic or remedies a societal challenge. The participants described what would be different if the change that they advocated was made.

The participants shared knowledge of self and would frequently offer a note of self-effacing behavior, such as a laugh or chuckle when they described themselves. Participants in his study described their affinity for or love of challenge, and the ability to tackle something that no one else had seen or wanted to do. They offered examples of risk-taking that presented uncertain outcomes. Sometimes this uncertainty spurred the participants on ways to work further on their goal. Finally, the participants valued an action orientation, describing examples of a general propensity toward action, taking

charge, or making something happen. Describing the steps of leading and initiating an effort was described frequently and communicated in detail with enthusiasm. The themes under the category of living the life of a social entrepreneur are presented in Chapter 5, and themes related to looking forward as a social entrepreneur are presented in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5

THEMES RELATED TO LIVING THE LIFE OF A SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR

This is the second of three chapters that present the findings of the study. There are three primary themes that emerged related to living the life of a social entrepreneur as described in experiences shared by the social entrepreneurs. The first theme is creating a structure or process with a sub-theme of integrating business and social principles. The second theme describes personal engagement of the social entrepreneur and offers defining moments in the work as a sub-theme. The third theme elucidates the role of the social entrepreneur as demanding and complex, offering sub-themes of relationship aspects, and dealing with uncertainty. Lastly, the themes and sub-themes related to the nature of interactions with outside entities are presented.

Structuring the Entity

Structuring the entity refers to the theme that emerged from participants conversations in how they created the structures and processes of their organization. The participants took great care in describing how they designed, developed and implemented the organization they had envisioned. Doug described the following:

> I went to the chairman of the board, chairman of the finance committee, and CEO and said, I have this idea . . . I want to start a program to figure out a way to pay for the health care for the uninsured. . . . Eventually we will get other hospitals in the community involved as well. And then I outlined how, what my idea was, and how the rules would work so that people could participate. So we went to the board . . . I said I need $2 million dollars. They had some money, but to do some kind of entrepreneurial basis . . . they really trusted me and knew I would not

> squander the money, and they wanted to do something for the community. . . . It was kind of like a baby, you know. It was a subsidiary non-profit of Health East. . . . It was, in fact, being nurtured along inside the organization, and we took advantage of Health East from the point of using an infrastructure. In other words, somebody elseôs infrastructure at little or no cost, so personnel, human resources, all those kinds of things were provided to get it going. It took about 10 years to move from being a subsidiary to a community based organization. We didnôt just rush out and make it a community based organization . . . we kind of incubated the whole thing from the beginning, which made it go a long way to its potential success.

Barb recalled the early days of conceiving her business model and its distinguishing feature. She said:

> We had to have seed capital, and I approached this like a business as opposed to just coming up with a really great social idea. My social entrepreneurial business came about, but it always, always had a social tie to it. It wasnôt an afterthought . . . I started this in 2001, and weôve really founded this based on our social cause. It wasnôt that we were an entrepreneur and then decided to do something. We were really based on the cause . . . from the very beginning, from the get go. It's all part of the plan I need to make a huge difference . . . that is the real driver of the store. Otherwise we are just a consignment store of some sort that people go to, and they buy and they look, they buy things and they leave; the cause is related to our business. . . . And with our model, all you have to do is shop . . . . because weôve got the stores. The foundation gets much more interest from people who

> love the fact that weôve created a model that brings money into our cause. . . . I look at the community and there is this philanthropic pie, and thereôs x amount of money in the philanthropic pie. Some years the arts are really hot . . . some years itôs politics, some years itôs this or that. And so, weóre all just taking our little wedge of that pie. But the overall pie in my mind and this isnôt research- based, but the overall pie in my mind doesnôt really change. What happens is that it just changes who gets it . . . but people love that fact that weôve created this entrepreneurial model that has ongoing revenue stream.

Jacquie recognized the potential in an innovative structure and formed her organization around its model. She commented with the following:

> I went to leadership conference in Washington D.C., and I heard Billy Shore speak. It was the first time I had ever heard of an organization, a non-profit organization, having a for-profit entity. So he had started a consulting firm of a for-profit company of consultants that would go and consult with non-profits to help them grow. And the profits they made from the non-profit company were donated to the nonprofit. I thought, ñoh my god, that was the coolest thing I ever heardò. And at the same time, a friend of mine said Kiernan is getting so popular, heôs such a celebrity, he could have his own beer. And the fact that the CFO of Kara Pubs was like, ñyou guys have to stop giving all the money away, you have no charity strategy and so . . . come up with a strategy for givingò. So I put these three things together and thought, ñOK, what if we come up with our own beer?ò

Dan talked about how one begins to build a structure prior to its development.

> Well, itôs actually a lot like building a wall, you know. Thereôs a lot of people who are building that wall . . . somebody actually has to begin to lay the foundation for the bricks and even before that, visualize that the wall is needed. . . . In 1987, when we acquired the clinic to start the [residency] program, we didnôt tell anybody because it wasnôt looked on by the greater physician community as a good thing that a hospital would be part of a clinic. We decided after two years to sever our ties with the University [of Minnesota] and began the work to build our own, and recruit a faculty of doctors, because that would be part of the legacy to producing doctors whoôll stay, and have an affinity for the inner-city where a lot of primary care doctors are really needed.

As Laurie reflected on how she perceives structure, she shared the following perspective:

> Most people look at reality and itôs very fixed in their mind, and they really donôt question it much. They might get mad about it and frustrated . . . but they donôt really question it or look for a way to rearrange it to make it work. And for some reason, I like to do that. Its fun for me, so itôs a lot like a puzzle and . . . it gives me sense of hope, you know? I always have the feeling, well, if we move this over here and this over there, or if we re-merchandise the detergent aisle with refillable machines and give people coupons, then essentially, we can solve these problems in a new way, but itôs using existing infrastructure. . . . Restore started as a retail store and then it morphed. I started by just offering refillable bottles, and with an incentive dollar off, and I started using a common institutional program like branding. I thought, I'm not gonnaô fill other peopleôs bottles

because I want my brand and my name to be in front of people when they get home, and I want the ingredients to be listed, and the want the usage instructions to be there. So I had essentially looked at branded refill . . . I created that.

Doug offered more about his experience in determining the type of structure and how it would work and shared:

Many things like this have lots of good intentions . . . but they don't apply some important principles. And once they do create the principles, they need to stick to it. For example, one of the principles that we had was that this was going to be privately funded . . . and there a reason for that. . . . There's always the lure of government money. The problem with that is twofold, and when the government money dries up, people get hurt. I decided that if we ever access any government money, it wouldn't be for anything related to the direct care of the patient. We'd be very, very careful about anything we did in terms of government.

In describing the original idea, Doug also shared his ideal structure:

You could take care of everybody in that middle section, and then over the top of that . . . care management. Not in the health insurance care management, which is controlling that access. It's more a matter of social interaction and teaching. I'd had a picture in my mind of how this would work, and it keeps giving, and the ultimate program is not very far from that original program.

Marnita recalled how the structure of her organization has evolved:

I figured that I could eventually create an experience marrying an idea that would become socially contagious, and then I started studying. We started with the limited idea. We were just going to provide access. We were just going to see

> what happened when we bumped people up against each other, when we discovered it that itôs much more robust than that. It goes way deeper and [is] actually more effective.

Laura described the importance of an existing structure that could work to advance the organization. She commented:

> In some ways, I feel like we had had all the advantages of not having to start an organization or business, because we had an existing structure to work within that had already been created legally and structurally. We had a space and all that. We were able to move quickly on the ideas, and make change really quickly without a lot of resistance or a lot of hang-ups about how things had always been, or things [that] had been tried before and didnôt work. One of the pieces we decided on is a really guiding principle, and a real defining factor about our work, is that sense of transformation. . . . The organization is really about optimism and isnôt about treating our clients as victims, or trying to bring more attention onto the plights of artists. Itôs more about bringing artists to a place where they can contribute more. . . . We look to the models from other social entrepreneurs, from local food organizations weôve connected with through social venture partners, urban agriculture, community organizations models . . . so weôre able to kind of take pieces of, [and] certainly we borrow from all of these fields all the time, and try to synthesize them into something that works for us.

Susan described the current structure of the Eureka Recycling:

> The organization has certain capabilities, depending on the make-up, and thatôs something that Iôm very interested in all the time. What is our current capability?

> Because of our current capabilities, opportunities are endless. He [Tim] was coming to Minnesota, and was connected to the area, and it was like, youôre not going to work anywhere else, you are coming here . . . and this is what weôve got to do. Heôs based in economics. He has this love of putting things together, the operations and such; I donôt have of a love of the risks . . . so anyway, between us that complement is enormous.

Integration of Business and Social Principles

Throughout our conversations, participants often talked about the integration of business and social principles.

Hussein shared:

> We have two organizations. We have the African Development Center which is a 501c3 organization. The one that owns the building is purely for-profit. At the end of the year if it makes money, and I hope it makes a lot, we pay taxes on that. Then we have the ADC, which is a purely social enterprise. In many ways itôs no different, if not much more unique and challenging, than for a private not-for-profit. When you seek one bottom line . . . how do I maximize the most profit for my investors? We do business development; thatôs business planning, lending, and technical assistance. We do first time home buyer training and financial education . . . meaning counseling and credit plans. The other is how we price our service in a way to be affordable for people who are helping themselves.

In describing the integration of business and social principles of ADC, Hussein also shared the following perspective:

> This is a business that has a little bit more than one bottom-line. . . . And you know bottom-line for the investors is to get some back some return, but at the same time to take care of the employees, the staff of the business, and be able to give back some of the money. Here at the African Development Center, all the money that we make for the ADC, and I mean the building that we own here which is another company, we set up ADC commercial real-estate and the deli . . . so even from the get go, I said that how can we mix a social vision, a social intent, with a business? Meaning, how we can make the organization, at least in the beginning, 5%, 10%, 25%, 50 % self sufficient?

Laura offered her perception of how a non-profit shares an entrepreneurial approach to the work and can expand by drawing on other approaches:

> The way we talk about our work is economic development and community development. . . . I think a place where we have pushed the social entrepreneur community is this idea that a non-profit, 20 year organization can be entrepreneurial. There really isn't any model for what we are trying to do, so we draw on a lot of different models. We're able to take pieces, or certainly borrow from all of these fields, and try to synthesize them into something that works for us . . . . We always have to adapt.

Jacquie integrated the concept of risk into how she views the principles of business and social issues:

> The social entrepreneur takes entrepreneurial principles and applies them to addressing a social issue. I have a tendency to feel there's a difference between those of us that set up a for-profit company structure and start an entrepreneurial

enterprise, and take all that risk. The non-profit that comes up with the plan for generating income, thatôs all great too, but I think theirsôis a very different experience. I think we're seeing more and more organizations that are this hybrid that are structured like Finneganôs, and to me, Iôm all about that because itôs so sustainable. Those of us who donôt get any government grants or money; we create all our own community wealth and give it back. And that to me is a very different thing.

Mary described how the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund approaches integration:

> Weôre trying to figure out how to make money, earn money so that we can achieve a mission . . . help entrepreneurs be more successful, and ultimately create a culture of entrepreneurship in this region. Weôre formed as a non-profit, but a non-profit is a tax status, itôs not a state of mind. So we look for ways to generate money in order to accomplish our works. Our revenue comes from grants, from government contracts, from fee for service. . . . We cobble then together on an ongoing basis. Even from a business perspective we make money. We sell our curriculum, we are developing some new products that weôre going sell in the market place.

Jacquie also talked about her perception of the business principle, profit. She offered a personal perspective:

> Profit is not a dirty word in my book. Profitôs a very good thing. And that makes us innovative, it makes us accountable . . . we even have to be even better business people (laughs). If you really want to make a difference, you have got to be increasing revenue. And if youôre going to make a difference in the social

> issue, you have got to be very focused and innovative and competitive, because you give your profits back, so you are not investing them in the company.

Doug talked about the difficulty of integrating the benefit of business and social values to his colleagues:

> I would say the hardest part is convincing business, the hard nosed business people, that thereôs economic value to them as well as social value. Finance people, who by nature are not as interested, necessarily, in the social aspects, they are interested in the ROI . . . ñwhatôs the pay back, whatôs in it for me?ò And even though they were a socially important industry, they struggle because they have their own issues.

Marnita offered a re-assessment of her view of social entrepreneurship as she spoke of integrating business and social principles:

> But what a social entrepreneur is to me is, somebody who actually looks at market place principles to take on issues of social importance. I sometimes think of social entrepreneurship as social profit. Instead of having the profit go back to a group of shareholders or investors . . . what you are reaping is social good. Thereôs an element in social entrepreneurship that has to be impacting some sort of systemic, social change. Not just selling a product, but that actually you are changing minds, or you are changing a way of seeing something, so that you are leveraging the power of the market and consumer. The power of the consumer to impact social changes . . . . With *Marnita's Table*, our mission is to make intentional social interaction patterns for society; deliver high social return on donor and grantor investments; and extend to these to the public and policy

> spheres. As for the for-profit side, we want to become the largest, most emulated and profitable premium life style brand while operating and providing jobs. At *Marnita's Table,* plus *Marnita's Market Place,* we always say, thereôs two separate Marnitas that share the same DNA, with different boards and missions.
>
> She later shared:
>
> People keep asking why you need two separate identities . . . why do you need a profit and a non-profit? We are really interested in this question about social capital. The market place offers other opportunities and faster way to get capitalized. This is *Marnita's Table* (shows the logo), this is serious with a little bit of fun, and this is *Marnita's Market Place*. This is fun with a little bit of serious. And we say weôre serious fun.

Dan spoke of his role in health care and shared his perspective of social and business integration in the following way:

> Iôve always in this chair, [Vice-President, Medical Affairs] tried to look at the hospitalôs prime directive: be available to have services, health care, and restorative services that people can access 24-7, and be of the highest quality. Thatôs our prime directive and [we] to try and do it at the most reasonable price.

Barbara described her early thoughts about integration and finding an appropriate model to use:

> We had to have seed capital, and I approached this like a business as opposed to just a, just coming up with a really great social idea. My social entrepreneurial

business came about, but it always, always, had a social tie to it. It wasnôt an afterthought.

Personal Engagement

Participants described situations, events or feelings that engaged them in the benefits of the work they had embarked upon. Mary described the following.

> There is a place where you are working with someone who wants to be a business person. Thereôs a place where the light goes on that they finally see what it means to be in a business, what they need to do, and what they need to think about. She later recalled a story told to her by a client; ñwhen I got into trouble with my government contract, these people from Northeast stayed next to me and helped us sort it outò. . . . Itôs the individual saying to the judge, ñIôm going pay these people backò . . . . It feels good; it feels really good because we have worked hard at it. It speaks to the personal relationship we have with people more than anything else.

Barbara talked about the frequent reminders that occur almost daily for her, evoking feelings of personal engagement:

> Every time I turn around, thereôs some reminder of where our money is going, and what weôre doing to help those women. . . . Iôm not curing breast cancer, I am taking care of a critical need for right now, and when I help that woman, the question comes, ñwell, have you made a difference in society?ò Well Iôve made a difference yes, weôve definitely made a difference. Because you know what happened to that woman? She and her children stayed in their home. She kept her children. Her children didnôt have to go out on the street. She didnôt have to

> go to the food shelf because we deliver meals. If we can keep that family somewhat together . . .

Jacquie described moments of personal engagement that gave energy.

> We get very energized here when we have breakthroughs. We're experiencing that right now in revisiting our giving. We're going to focus on one issue. We're doing a priority program, so we're picking hunger.

She later described another personal story where her energy and enthusiasm was evident:

> I realized at our 10 year anniversary, we really have got to have a clear message. She recounted a friend telling her, ñyou have to have one searing point of what you do, what's the difference you make?ò It's about food, and now we can say a pitcher of beer equals a meal. Now we have a message.

Hussein described the value of personally engaging to stay open to the client needs and options. He stated:

> It is about commitment from the get go . . . we have business planning class and about 80 to 85 people sign up for it. Eventually we end up funding fewer than ten of them, like eight or nine. But some do change and come up with something that's fundable, fits them, their schedule and it's doable . . . . the ideas, if we just stay open minded, you actually learn a lot about what people are saying about the business that they want to start.

As board chair, Doug was removed from the day to day operations of Portico, yet shared this example of on-going, personal engagement:

> Iôm always excited, reading the case studies of the people that get into the program . . . because for me, and where you sit, youôre a CFO, and patients are usually faceless. Your job is to get the money to take care of the patients. I always find it satisfying.

Laura reflected on her relationship with Springboard for the Arts and how after time, the personal engagement has both deepened and broadened.

> Iôve been here almost six years now, and it really feels like this is what Iôm supposed to be doing. This has turned out to be something that feels now, very purposeful when I look back on the experiences Iôve had. We really feel like our work is helping our clients make their own definition, decide what their definition of success is, and then move toward that. . . . So for some artists, that is their capacity to make a living, the economic piece. For some artists, itôs their ability to make social change with their work. For some artists, itôs a certain level of recognition or response to their work, and for some artists, itôs feeling like theyôre part of a community. . . . One thing that drives me crazy is when I talk to other people who work at arts organizations and I say, ñAre you an artistò? They say ñI am not, I am just an administrator, Iôm not an artist.ò I keep talking to them and they say, ñI have a degree in piano performance". Like how have we gotten to the point where people canôt own that because they cannot make their total livelihood, they donôt get to call themselves artists or acknowledge their own creative contributions? It is less about claiming space, and more about helping artists to claim their own space.

In recounting how the benefits of *Restore the Earth* could impact many,

Laurie offered this experience, personally engaging with her potential customers:

> We did the [Minnesota] State Fair, and people would get their little gift if they would watch the demo of the machine . . . and so I see their faces and everybody lit up because there was a sense of hope, like there is a solution. There is a way to refill that big bottle. I hated throwing that thing away. You can't really ignite passion in a person without a solution.

She also noted how personal engagement with the work made it difficult to acknowledge the challenges of her proposed solution, and the expectations of her outside advisors:

> What kept me going was the belief that I could do it, no matter what. Well finally, you know, there was just no more money and the board says to me that you got to close it down, and I sold the brand to a local manufacturer who's making the product. My board left me with the kernel of patents, but I thought, I cannot let this go . . . I thought this could change the world.

Tim included some of the more succinct comments around personal engagement:

> I would never have not done this . . . this is where you get into that boundary area. You know I love this work. I love the people here. I know how incredibly fortunate I am to be able to be doing this work. I truly feel like I married my skills, my aspirations, my hope and my subconscious in the things that I'm not even aware of. They are all tied together here, by the work I am able to do.

Tim continued:

> In this role, you know, itôs now called social entrepreneur. Itôs social change on so many levels, and what Iôve really appreciated about being in this business. The enterprise with Susan, itôs changed a lot of people. Itôs changed me. I think itôs changed Susan (laughs). Yes, itôs changed a lot of folks, not just those who are in our industry, but those of us who have lived it.

Defining Moments

There were times during the interviews that the participants shared what I call a ñdefining momentò in which the impact of what they had started, the challenges they faced, or resolved to move forward was recalled.

Susan recounted a past conversation between her and Tim:

> Waste management companies were coming and buying every single company. This is change, we canôt stay with this non-profit model you know, we canôt just do it because itôs right anymore. We've got to make this stuff an economic challenge for us to make it work. Anyway, for me, that was the moment in which we knew it was like, here in the moment of Eureka recycling. Here is the Eureka moment. . . . This is gold, you know and weôre going to demonstrate this to people, and they will see that itôs gold. Theyôre going to see that it isnôt garbage.

Susan continued:

> Thereôs a moment in which you realize this thing has the absolute potential of needing your whole life, and not turning out the way you want it to . . . . and you have to do it anyway. You know, and when you are in it, thereôs a certain moment . . . a different moment in that you feel like this is actually happening, and then a moment when you feel, like, itôs actually going to benefit people, and itôs going to

> go on. Itôs not just something in my head anymore. So I think the first moment is when you really come to terms with the fact that, what itôs going to personally take out of you, and people around you. Your experience and your relationship, your whole life, what itôs going to take . . . and you know that it really might not turn out the way you want it to. And then you say . . . Iôm going to go forward anyway. Ah, thatôs got to be a culminating moment.

Tim recounted his perspective during that time in organizationsô development, and shared this recollection:

> I donôt think I need to be reminded of that moment in 2000, when it became clear what we had to do. I donôt think that there was one individual moment either. Susan and I had countless conversations in which we knew what we had to do. We knew, we tried, we tried not to. . . . Itôs also the moment . . . I donôt know how to describe it . . . I wouldnôt say relief, but itôs somewhere between belief and exhilaration of the moment of choice, when you say, gotta go forward. Itôs that combination of the two . . . itôs just saying Iôm ready, I know what itôs going to take . . . ouch in advance, but here we go.

In reflecting on the impact of the aspect of her work with girls in poverty, Marnita shared the following:

> It is amazing, I mean it is profound. Itôs like having a state of grace . . . about having a moment of grace, of understanding what our obligation and role is in the world. Itôs not to enrich our material selves, it is to pass forward life.

Mary offered the following experience on moving the organization forward.

> I knew that it was my time [2003 Kellogg funding]. . . . It was a leadership transition for me . . . it was a spiritual moment . . . because I could see something I had really never seen before. I knew, I knew. Iôd read all the literature.

Laurie recalled her reactions to the closing of her enterprise:

> So finally, I went to my minister to get a last bastion of hope to keep going, and she said, "lay it downò. I canôt lay it down. She said, ñlay it downò. I canôt. And so what I am doing is writing a screen play. I'm laying it down on paper. Yeah, and yesterday, I took a job. I havenôt worked for anybody for 25 years. I was in a cold sweat signing this employment contract, but I had to.

Role is Demanding and Complex

Demanding and complex refers to the nature of themes that emerged from the participants as they described what it is like to live the life of a social entrepreneur. Demanding means difficult or hard, and complex refers to the many facets of the role they play. Two sub-themes emerged which are relationship aspects, and dealing with uncertainty.

Laura shared the following perspective:

> The challenges are hard. Some days are just harder. One of the biggest challenges, or one of the places here that it gets hard, is feeling that sometimes there is no model for what we are doing. As exciting as it is to make it up as you go along, I donôt really have days that you do just do what other people are doing . . . there just isnôt any model for what we are trying to do.

In describing the many aspects of the role, Hussein listed several of them.

> Itôs really hard work . . . to manage yourself, to really be a father of four children, and that is something. Find the time for your children, for yourself and get involved in the community . . . find time to seek out mentors, people who know more. Essentially what I am saying is [that] this is a life-long learning process.

Barbara shared her thoughts about both the demands and the rewards in the following:

> No way in my livelihood and wildest dream could I feel like I could have ever written a check for $1,000,000. I feel like I've really contributed. Itôs taken its toll on the entrepreneur side of me because itôs hard work, and because I care so much abut the causes and making this a successful model that will have longevity and sustainability after Iôm not doing it. Iôm not taking cash out of the business, Iôm putting cash in and so it is a strain. It is strain because itôs all your energy. . . . Itôs frustrating . . . it can be terribly frustrating, like today when my manager did not show up . . . you know this is a moving business and those days are very difficult for me.

Dan recalled the complex challenges of starting a new residency program:

> We had to convince a lot of people; we were a hospital, we were not an educational institution. In the not too remote past, it [the hospital] had a history of its own residency. Recalling on that and being lucky enough to be the first vice-president of Medical Affairs, I could get the ear of folks and be able to articulate . . . .one of the main reasons was the ability to produce our own doctors.

Jacquie described ways to address the demands and complexities of the work.

> Itôs just, no matter how many people tell you it will never work, you're crazy. I mean you just have to have a very strong belief and you need a small support group that actually buys in . . . . I had a couple of people that I respected that were interested. People that said, ñI know you can do thisò. Everybody needs a couple of people . . . somebody that respects [your efforts]. Kind of like the inner board of directors thing; thatôs people you believe in and they believe in you.

Relationship Aspects

Relationship aspects emerged as a sub-theme within the context of the role as demanding and complex. They described the work impacting o their interpersonal connections or involvements, and made reference to loneliness and isolation in the role.

Jacquie offered her perspective:

> It is a lonely place . . . it is. Thatôs one thing that I didnôt realize that it would be like in this job, and especially that getting staff . . . it really does put you in a different . . . you know youôre struggling with decisions on, do you fire people, do you keep people? All those things that are just so hard.

Susan offered a perspective impact on relationships:

> Itôs hard to maintain a lot of other relationships, and it takes work to maintain them well. It takes time from them, so those relationships you know, when youôre walking into it, you might not be completely explaining, oh by the way, itôs sixty or seventy hours a week. Iôm clearly working on this and thinking about it. Thereôs this very small intimate group of people who do the same thing (being social entrepreneurs) and weôre pretty connected.

Tim offered a perspective on relationships that referred to both his past and present work situations in which he serves as a co-leader:

> I would comment that Iôve not felt particularly professionally lonely in these 10 years like Iôve experienced before this. Thereôs what sometimes feels like the burden of the work and the organization, you know, the level of commitment and work and thought that it takes. Thatôs when Iôm on the outside the wall of the building. Thereôs loneliness at times of the burden of it that you feel at 2:30 in the morning. But this is different. I ran an organization before in which I was the sole executive director, and thereôs a completely different feeling of loneliness there.

Dan offered a brief comment in reference to relationships and his work within the organization, and its impact over time:

> You know, my wife has always called this hospital my mistress.

Participants also mentioned the impact on relationships and the realization of their absence. Marnita offered:

> You hear from all these social entrepreneurs, so theyôre kind of living out on the edge. Iôm not the only one, [and] maybe Iôm feeling like Iôm so isolated because Iôm not really in company with others. And we all play such a good game out in public. Nobody wants to act as if they are on the edge.

Laurie reflected on the role of support to a social entrepreneur:

> I think in looking back, somehow this Lone Ranger thing is a problem. Typically in business, we tend to think we should surround ourselves with traditional business types. Where social entrepreneurs tend to think, is something in the world that doesnôt even have a place yet. I should have surrounded myself with

> people like Ann and Susan, to make sure thereôs a critical mass of other social entrepreneurs. . . . If you donôt get that support, you kind of think you are going to do it the traditional way. I donôt know that you really can. You have got have someplace to get acknowledged, to get energized.

Dealing with Uncertainty

The majority of the participants spoke of the uncertainty that they faced in the role of social entrepreneur. While an earlier theme described tolerance for risk and challenge, uncertainty was expressed in the form of ambiguity in what the future might hold, how the enterprise would be financed, and about how they would approach the future.

Hussein shared thoughts that reflected the uncertainty in many facets of his work:

> You are always consistently thinking about the income thatôs coming to the organization to be able to provide a base for employees . . . but then you are thinking about how to grow the organization and you wear different hats. On one hand, you are seeking or asking for grants, and on the other hand you are quickly reminding yourself to think about a building. . . . In any given month, we look around and ask, how are we spending and how are things lining up? . . . How do you do bonds where you can still function and pay your expenses so there is always this balance?

Laurie shared two perspectives of uncertainty related to closing her business:

> So Iôve raised about $4.5 million. but that wasnôt enough. We were trying to commercialize the technology with the brand, and I didnôt realize you really need $40 million to build a brand. After the most recent recession, you know the funds

> started to dry up. And for about since 2004, or 2005, I have been seeing this coming that we wouldnôt be able to sustain raising the money we needed. . . . .
>
> I do have an offer to buy the patents, but as far as I am concerned, I donôt know if itôs for real. I mean, I have had so many things fall through that . . . Iôd kind of let go in that regard, where I am not hanging on to . . . if it goes through, or it doesnôt go ahead.

Marnita referred to the importance business structure of *Marnita's Market Place* to address an uncertain future:

> Our role is not to enrich our material selves, it is to pass forward light so it [*Marnita's Market Place*] is the only way I can use the market to leverage that. I am much more focused on getting rich than I have ever been in my life. I absolutely need the wealth in order to be insulated, because I really donôt want to end up at 85 [years old] in a gutter.
>
> She later expressed how living with uncertainty is very familiar:
>
> Sometimes I can feel the stress hormones in my body. I can actually feel them, and I met this woman who says, ñI am going to teach you how to be calmò. You know, I have been self-supporting since I was 16 years old, and have quite frankly [been] flying a lot of that time without any type of safety net.

Mary commented on how an uncertain future has shaped her role, and how she approached it:

> Iôve been at this job for 20 years, and so everyday has been different, if not everyday, there have been cycles. . . . Thereôs another piece to this. I am a rural social entrepreneur. If I want a new job, there arenôt any jobs for me. I grew this

> because I had a desire for something, and there was no place to go. There was no career ladder. So I had to create my own, and it just kept evolving and evolving and evolving. . . . I thought several times I would just have to leave because I can't do this anymore. . . . I don't know what to do and how to do it, and I feel like I'm drowning. And something would unroll for me in there, and I would get re-energized. It's happened probably three or four times. There was a lot of chaos, and somebody showed me the organizational growth cycle. . . . Between each stage, there is chaos until you move on.

Barbara relayed uncertainty of both the current state and approach the future:

> Because now I am 63 [years old] and so, how long is it going to take me . . . . because my beautiful plans [of franchising] had a hiccup in it, in that I couldn't, didn't predict the recession along with everyone else . . . and no one can get loans to open these stores right now, and so what I have done is actually put it on hold. How much longer am I going to be able to do this? I look at my friends. I had lunch with a wonderful friend who is semi-retired and just got back from China, and I think, "that sounds like fun". When was the last time I went on a vacation? Hmm, I don't really recall.

Two participants expressed a measure of surprise in describing their success in the face of uncertainty. Laura commented:

> It is incredible how much the world has changed in general, but also for non-profits and the system of support for non-profits. . . . I think our support has been pretty steady, but now we have the huge growth in budget and we have all these new funders. But then when I look at these five majors, [funders] only two are

> still with us. So we have experienced the same drop-off in art specific funding, but I think we have the reason we have been able to be successful, is that we have been able to find and make a case for other kinds of support. We're increasingly funded by people who are interested in economic sustainability and economic development, community issues . . . that has totally changed in the last 5 years.

Doug expressed surprise at Portico's survival in comparison to many organizations that have a short life:

> Programs like this have kind of a short life and can die easily, just like a lot of businesses can die; entrepreneurial ideas can die if there's something they don't have [such] as access to capital. So I was really happy, though we worked hard at it. . . . Not only survived, but really become an important part of the Twin Cities community, and more or less 15 years, where a lot of people look to it to help [them] deal with it [heath issues] or solve some of its problems, and it can be a hospital, it can be the patients, and it can be the [state] government.

Interaction with Outside Entities

Interaction with outside entities refers to the theme and sub-themes that emerged from participant conversations in regard to how they related to outside entities in their role as social entrepreneur. Throughout our conversations, participants described their interactions as experiences that were connecting, collaborating or challenging.

Doug used the term networking in describing the need to interact with individuals who were usually competitors. He commented on its importance:

> Networking is really important . . . I was still me, meeting, learning who the CFOs were, things like that. So it wasnôt as strong as if I had been here for ten years or something like that. . . . The networks and the relationships that people have within the hospitals, among the hospitalsô competitive nature, was more collaborative. It wasnôt so easy to convince those hard-nosed CFOs to put up some money to get into the program. You know, it took a long time, and in fact, some didnôt really come in and engage until that last two or three years.

Barbara shared the importance of outreach:

> Every time I get to tell the story, itôs just so much fun. We were the charity of choice [event and date not given] and we did a fashion show with models wearing clothes from the Hope Chest, and with me interweaving the story. The audiences are fantastic. I mean, they love hearing this. Iôm funny. Iôm a good presenter. I horse around, you know . . . but itôs just sharing the story and having people come up and sharing their story.

Hussein commented on the importance of interacting with the community:

> So thereôs always this balance. So when we provide services, for example, to a person, a business plan and invest the client from beginning to end it can cost us about $10,000. We know this is a cost but they can only afford $1000 so we have to underwrite. . . . is that where we do go out in the community where people who will understand, connect with the story and be willing to invest for growth and sustainability of the organization? That is what I worry about.

Connecting

Participants often described connections they made in their work that brought them into relationships or situations that were important.

Mary spoke about connecting with colleagues in the development community:

> In the 1990ôs, we were all women on staff, and my colleagues would like to talk about us, ñthereôs those women doing some stuff over thereò. So we held three events; we brought business owners together and then invited our colleagues and our friends, and community leaders to come in. The first one [event] was at the Holiday Inn in Eveleth [Minnesota]. There were probably a hundred people there. The next one was at the Holiday Inn in Duluth, and the third was at the DEC (*Duluth Event Center*) because we kept outgrowing the space. . . . At the first event, a couple of my [male] colleagues said to me, ñIôve never had somebody thank me for the work I was doing for themò. And I heard that from many people. After another event, one participant with a great government job came up to me and said, ñyou have any job openingsò?

Barbara spoke of the importance of connecting with the community and its impact:

> Itôs having people emailing and saying, ñhow did you convince the *Farve (4Hope) Foundation* to give you that moneyò? My answer is they just heard about us because weôre so known in the community, they wanted to help because Deanna [Farve] is a breast cancer survivor. They wanted to help in the community.

Jacquie commented on connections in this way:

> My journey is kind of about the importance of connections throughout my life that Iôve always really kept in touch with people.

The importance of making connections and the resulting collaboration is part of Marnita's strategy. She shared:

> I want to change minds about what good policy looks like, how to get these stakeholders to the table. Everybody has said over and over, ñif you could just get everybody to the tableò. I just took it at face value. Well, there is not really much I can do about racism, and itôs really hard to convince somebody that they have privilege and have extra advantages. By the way, you have just lost the time that you could be in a room talking about what you want to do together. So I gave up all that conversation. I said, ñLetôs just move outside the room and letôs focus on what we can do togetherò. There are a lot of trick in that, as the magician said.

Hussein described experiences with connecting experiences inside and outside of his organization:

> Iôm about 18 months into a program at Harvard. What Iôm dealing with is a performance challenge at the African Development Center in terms of growth and relationship building. It gives you space to read, to reflect and to really write; to listen to other organizations and their performance challenges. It also gives you theory behind the practice of development, leadership, management and self-discipline. It also tells you a little bit about the issues that the organizations are struggling with. What Iôm also finding out is that how similar we are, though unique in many ways.

Dan described how connections were a part of his work:

> I guess it was connections . . . I mean, you know, part of a natural connection, hospitals and clinics. Before that time you had the clinics, and they were just outgrowths of activities of individual doctors who practiced together and they chose hospitals. . . . Part of what I was saying was that if we had more defined connections between those clinics, that could serve the hospitals need for patients.

By serving in a variety of roles, Dan commented that he could make other connections:

> Itôs a funny deal. I sat in a unique situation that allowed me to be interfacing with the Airports Commission. On one, hand wearing my military uniform as an asset . . . it gave me a window into something else that causes them to rethink what they were doing. . . . Through my community connection, [I] get the emergency medical community to reflect on it.

Laura commented on the role of connecting as important for Springboard for the Arts:

> Springboard is definitely a connector organization; a connector, a translator, a system navigator. That is what we are good at. Bringing that artist community and the larger community, bring those two things closer together.

Collaborating

Throughout our conversations, participants often talked about the importance of collaborating in their work. They offered examples of the benefit of working with others, and used terms such as partnering.

Jacquie offered a specific example of intentional partnering:

> We're partnering with one individual non-profit in each state where we sell our product. We're going to do more of a partnership and maximize synergies, and be very strategic about how we can help that cause, and how they can help us. We're really working on strategic partnerships right now.

Laurie spoke of the importance of support from others as she developed her products:

> I raised capital from the time I opened Restore products in 2001 . . . and now we have five patents on our technology. . . . You know, it's always been a struggle raising money, but I've had the support of very, very supportive high net worth women.

Laura spoke about collaborations in terms of how relationships developed with the philanthropic community for her organization:

> In terms of our relationships with foundations . . . they demand a certain level of infrastructure and governance that makes it hard for them to be nimble. We found that foundations love to support nimble organizations, so that in some ways, that is a piece of the structure that has been a huge advantage that we are able to act quickly. It really feels like we have partner relationships with foundations more than traditional non-profit. In other non-profits where I have worked, you feel like you are always asking them to support what you want to do. Instead, I believe we approach them as developing a relationship, so we can define what needs to be addressed, and we can find out how to do that quickly and respond quickly in a way that most foundations can't do because of their structure.

Laura commented on a network of organizations and its benefit:

> I feel like we really are developing and have developed a network of other organizations nationally, who are in some way doing similar work or we feel like we have a fit with. . . . Through a partnership, weôve been able to develop a really common understanding and a common shared goal . . . that begins to feel like its more about movement-building than one particular program or service.

Doug spoke about the importance of collaborating in order to achieve a goal of starting what became Portico:

> My view was that it was a great idea and all; it was supported by one of the religious systems, and it was never going to amount to anything in that it was really different . . . which was to have all those components of health care in the Twin Cities come together to do something in a non-competitive way.

Jacquie offered two perspectives on collaborating, one identifying and hearing best practices, and the second describing the importance of partnering to create synergy:

> Part of our mission is to inspire others as well. I want to continue to be involved in mentoring social entrepreneurs and trying to help them, and trying to share the best practices of everything that we have done. . . . Thatôs the thing I love about social entrepreneurs that are very different from business people . . . and just in the beer business, itôs very competitive. Nobody helped or shared, you keep your information tight and your network is tight, and you just donôt want other companies getting that. Social entrepreneurs, I find, we share everything.

She spoke of the advantages of collaborating to achieve the goal:

> It [hunger] is a chronic issue in the country and in Minnesota. I started kind of poking around on it, and found the emergency food shelf network that is

> supporting local farmers. They [food shelves] buy fresh produce, so they are supporting the ecosystem right here. They deliver fresh, nutritious food to food shelves. What a cool thing. So us, by partnering with them, they can expand their program throughout the State of Minnesota. So theyôre going to have eight new partnerships in Minnesota. Weôre totally leveraging. Then I can go to bars and restaurants and say, ñhereôs your local farmer thatôs providing food to the poor, and why donôt you purchase produce from them?ò We can help in that whole synergy piece . . . one plus one equals three.

Barbara expanded the role of customer in describing how she worked with all the entities that are part of her work as social entrepreneur:

> Somebody says, ñwhoôs your customer?ò I say we have many customers, we have our donors. They are key customers because if I donôt have the merchandise, there is no business . . . we have our shoppers we need to appreciate . . . to know where the money is going. We have our volunteers who love the fact that they can come in and mess around with all of these fantastic things, put them out . . . have a great time. Then we have all the people that we help. We work very hard to make sure the way we provide services is easy. The decision is placed in the hands of the people who understand these women.

Challenging

Interactions with outside entities were seen by several participants as challenging when they shared examples of differing perceptions, barriers to progress and difficult relationships.

Laurie described a challenging period in her attempts to have a large company implement her companyôs products:

> Of course, I donôt know what all happens behind the scenes. All I know is that in certain consumer test in big companies, customers loved it. Weôve come a long way in these companies, but when it comes right down to it at some level, the people in these companies first of all are not entrepreneurial at all. And so youôre up against that emotional mindset of person whoôs not very visionary and in thinking ahead, happy with what theyôre doing. So we always end up getting killed. . . . We donôt have proof that it can scale. Well, how can you prove something is scalable unless you start trying to scale it, right? . . . And that was the big concern of the big companies . . . so essentially there it was, being stopped by the unknown.

Doug spoke about the structural challenges that can present barriers to moving forward:

> I think originally, I had in mind some unique financing ideas that I wasnôt able to make come alive. . . . My original idea was to build an endowment trust to pay for the [health] care. The problem was, I couldnôt convince anybody to build a giant endowment fund. . . . I even suggested some interesting ideas to the State [of Minnesota] to create an endowment, but they wouldnôt go for it, because the State doesnôt do things on a multi-year basis.

Barbara recounted her interactions with a net-working group she found challenging:

> There is an organization, *The Alliance of Social Entrepreneurs,* that is a nation-wide organization. . . . So I belonged, I went to a couple of their kind of convention meetings. But it didn't fulfill a need for me . . . it was more of the big picture discussions, when mine is down to earth business. . . . I agree all these discussions are fantastic . . . but I mean, they weren't benefiting. Lots of theory, and I wanted action. I wanted to know, who's going to help me do this . . . going to finance my help . . . loan money to my potential franchisees? That's what I was looking for, and it wasn't there.

Mary recalled an earlier perception of the term social entrepreneur that arose from a challenging experience with an outside philanthropic entity:

> I had resentment against the term [social entrepreneurship] for along time, actually. . . . When it first evolved, the foundation said . . . ñwell, the answer to your funding problem is to start a business and make a lot of money, then you will be fineñ. It was a convenient thing to say to non-profits; ñthen you'll be fineò and it's the hardest work.

Marnita shared her perspective about the challenging aspects of interacting with funding entities:

> So many of them [non-profit funders] wanted best practices and non-profits that ran like businesses. When they actually saw a non-profit that ran like a business, they did not know what to do about that. . . Does that make sense, saying that,

ñwell, maybe we shouldnôt fund you because you get forty percent of your income from having a revenue streamò?

Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the themes in the category called ñliving the life of a social entrepreneurò. The chapter encompasses the numerous aspects of the life of a social entrepreneur.

The participants provided many examples of how they began to create a structure or process for the enterprise they were trying to create. In these examples, they spoke of it in terms of having the structure identified in their minds; of creating a platform upon which to describe it to others; and how they went about the business of designing it. Integrating business and social principles emerged as a sub-theme within the creation of a structure. Several times, individuals described the integration was present from ñthe get goò and not an afterthought, or related that the organization required a business model so it would be sustainable.

Participants talked about their personal engagement to the work of the enterprise that they had created. They gave numerous examples of commitment, being re-invigorated by the work, pride at seeing what was being accomplished, and how this was an integral part of their life. The majority of the participants also shared what I call, ñdefining momentsò, when a stark moment of the full presence of their work had a great impact. These moments were easily recalled, and many times described graphically.

The participants talked about how the role of social entrepreneur was demanding and complex. At times, others from the outside world were discouraging, the audiences to convince were many, and at times, there was no clear path ahead. They had numerous

responsibilities and juggling them was challenging. They also spoke of the role of social entrepreneur having a relationship aspect. Examples were being lonely, out there on the edge, and that the work required time and energy, affecting the amount of time you had available to be in relationship.

Social entrepreneurs also experienced dealing with uncertainty. Conversations were sprinkled with references to how am going to do this, how much can I do, and described instances in which financial maturity was a key concern.

All of the participants shared experiences that described interactions with outside entities as part of their work, either in the early stages or along the way. Participants made reference to the importance of connecting with people or organizations by networking, developing contacts, and gaining supporters to advance their goals. The connections often served as a base to further develop a relationship.

In addition to connecting, most participants spoke of the importance of collaboration to accomplish their goals. They spoke in terms of partnership with organizations outside of theirs, financial support to move forward, collaborations that helped others reach their goals, as well and in the absence of collaboration, awareness that their goals may not be accomplished.

Interaction with outside entities also produced perceived challenges for the social entrepreneur. Several participants described these challenges in terms such as differing goals, methods and structures in the corporate, governmental and philanthropic communities.

Themes related to aspects of looking forward as a social entrepreneur will be presented in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

THEMES RELATED TO THE ASPECTS OF LOOKING FORWARD

This is the third of three chapters that presents the findings of this study. The previous chapters speak to the origins of how the participants entered social entrepreneurship, and the day to day experiences in the life of a social entrepreneur. This chapter presents two themes related to aspects of looking forward. The first theme is leadership awareness. All of the social entrepreneurs shared experiences describing how they experienced and recognized their roles as leaders, and how this presented in both their present day work or as they looked into the future with respect to themselves or their enterprises. A sub-theme emerged, called aspects of team development and changing roles. A second theme reflects the participant perspectives on the importance of sustainability.

Leadership Awareness

Mary spoke of a new awareness and the importance of her leadership role as the organization evolved:

> We needed to make some significant shifts, and it meant I need to engage in a different way and be the kind of manager I hadnôt been. So I got a coach, I re-aligned, started some organizational realignment which meant some people left. . . . Three people came back that had left earlier during a time when things werenôt so great. They are now three of our four key leaders, and Iôm engaged in a way Iôve never been . . . Iôve learned a lot about what it means to be a team, and Ióve learned a whole lot more about being a leader and what that means. I see my

> biggest job is to help the next generation of leaders prepare for the time when Iôm not there any more.

She commented further on a new perception of leading after an experience learning how to drive a car differently:

> The more skilled a person is, the more the business will follow . . . so when I was on the race track [Brainerd International Raceway driving school] in Brainerd [MN] a few weeks ago, the life lesson was that if you look where youôre going you will end up in the ditch, and itôs in the way you handle the turns. Thereôs a point where you shift from where youôre heading to; you look in the distance to where you want to be. If you look where you want to be, your car will follow that. So they said, and they kept saying, ñif youôre not [looking far enough ahead], if you wonder if youôre looking far enough ahead, youôre notò. So itôs the life lesson; you stay focused on where you want to be, not where you are going. Iôm just starting to explain it to people.

The importance of leadership continuity was expressed by Doug as he described his long term role as board chair, and the ideal executive leader:

> I've been the chairman of the board the whole time, and so I continue to drive it . . . within the original concept. . . . I was very fortunate in the early days to come across Deb, who had some experience in this whole area, and ultimately ended up having a lifelong passion to do it, which it what it takes at the executive level. People running this program canôt run it as a job. They have to have, it has to be part of their blood and they understand it. . . . She has also been very responsive to my direction as it related to changes like . . . hearing the principles of what

> weôre doing, sticking to knitting in terms of her job. Weôve grown in some areas that we didnôt originally envision like the outreach area . . . that just came along.

Hussein spoke about his role as founder and described activities and a perspective on leadership:

> I am a founder, and I donôt even use it on my business card . . . Iôm the founder and everybody knows it. Iôm only interested in the sustainability of the work. At every staff meeting, I ask some basic questions; what training are people involved with or taking; what books are they reading; and do you really know one more thing about this organization that you didnôt know last time we met? So this idea is that leadership is not a position, itôs an activity. If I see a prime idea, I just want somebody to come up with the idea and tell us why we need to do it. And I will be the first person to show up to follow it, not to lead. I feel that founders, they have their own space, but we as founders, we have to be very careful, I think, to not suck up the whole space for the staff, for the organization. . . . I really think that leadership is something everybody can learn and grow into, if they have the willingness, the commitment, the time and the training.

Jacquie reflected on her desire to be a good leader and how she finds it a work in process:

> I worry, I just, Iôm not the management piece of it, and for anybody whoôs an entrepreneur like, you get into it because maybe you have a vision . . . and it doesn't necessarily mean good manager. That piece concerns me. Am I being a good leader? . . . Iôve been reading tons of leadership books and trying to

> [understand] how can I become a better leader . . . when you are used to being a one man band kind of thing; that takes really, some adjusting.

Working inside a large organization as a social entrepreneur gave Dan a different awareness, as he shared his perspective of leading projects to action:

> Decision making is diffuse in a large organization, and ultimately it will get to a decision maker, but thereôs a process that needs to be followed. In private practice, all of those things are truncated, because it is the idea creator [who] is the decision maker. So when I deal with private practice doctors, they can go from ideas to decision to execution on a decision in days. The way large organizations learn is much different, and the way they decide is much different. So Iôm able to truncate that, and I have history of success in taking ideas to business, and so Iôm afforded a deference that a lot of people donôt get.

Jacquie spoke about her identity, relating a view that the outside world has of her as sole leader representing the organization. This presented a challenge for her. She remarked:

> You know that whole Jim Collins, *Built to Last*; I think that a great book is from *Good to Great*. His book is about, build the structure not around the founder, because if the founder goes, then you lose, you know. Itôs just that Iôve been a one person shop for a long time. And so when all of these articles that come out, always have my mug on them . . . and itôs not about me. This is not about me. It is about a group of people coming together and trying to make a difference. And weôre primarily volunteer run because of hundreds of volunteer . . . itôs about what we are doing, itôs not about me. But it always ends up in the media, it turns

> out that way. . . . I donôt like that . . . even trying to get a story done about our volunteers. Like last year we pitched a bunch of PR stories, and I wanted them about the volunteers . . . they still came back and made it about me; I tried but you canôt. Somehow people like that . . . I donôt know why.

Marnita described how, coming to realize her leadership, brought forth a different voice:

> I have always used every bit of moniker to pass it forward. For me, I actually do I realize I am really an important voice; there arenôt enough of my voices out there because we can be so easily marginalized, because we so rarely have any resources.

Susan described how the in the early days of Eureka, the concept of co-leadership was part of the conversation:

> I think that people will write books about starting something. . . . There are five, Iôve had four. Other people will tell you publicly, that I am a founder of Eureka recycling. . . . There was a group of us, and I remember sitting down at the table and saying, ñyou know now, you have to be in, and you have to be here for certain period of time, and weôre going to do these core capacities that we have to have, and we have to have allegiance to using them, and its going to take a lotò. And they were like, ñIôm inò. . . . The take away of this whole structure of how companies are run is so seriously flawed . . . I donôt even know how it can work. What really happening is that there is co-leadership, and itôs not being recognized.

The leadership structure of Eureka is a partnership, and Susan shared the genesis of the role with the board as a co-leadership model with Tim:

> The complement between us is enormous. You know, we talked about this going into this, and I was, here . . . the board, which is assuming that I was [the leader] and Tim would be like, operations. I was like, no, you don't understand that . . . that what we have to be *is* [for emphasis] co-presidents.

Team Development and Changing Roles

At some point during our conversation, participants spoke about the involvement with the individuals with whom they worked most closely. At times, the social entrepreneurs referred to these individuals as a team that played an integral role in the work; in some instances the team was in the process of being formed, and in other situations, the absence of and need for a team was recognized. Mary described how a new leader in her organization was helping to develop a strong team:

> I've got a 29 year old who's so running, like, our biggest department, and we spent a good hour this morning . . . we're helping to pay for his MBA, and he goes to school. He's taking a "how to build functional teams" class, comes back and applies it that afternoon. It's absolutely fascinating and I watch him. He's so smart, and I say what do you need, you know, you're doing great. And I watch him grow into that position, and it is just so heartwarming. . . . Well, I don't know if he'll replace me . . . he is so excited about learning the whole transformational nature of the work that we do, and how it changes people. And I watch him do things that I don't know how to do, and I can affirm him and support him for that.

Barbara offered a perspective on how she augmented her skills to create a team that complemented her strengths:

> Iôve been fortunate in most of my hires to surround myself with people that are good at the things that I am not good at. Because Iôm not a retailer, Iôm not a merchandiser; I donôt know how to merchandise a store. I know how to look at a P and L . . . I know how to say ok, this something has got to go on sale, itôs been on the floor way too long . . . but you know, thatôs not my expertise.

Jacquie shared what she believed was important as her organization began to take on additional staff and create a team:

> I am a huge believer in the laws of attraction. And weôve got a great system here for first of all, people [who] volunteer; they intern. We hire from within. So itôs people who are passionate about the mission, and they buy in to what we are doing. And then they typically volunteer their time and engage, and then you can tell whoôs passionate and on fire; the right people. You attract the right things with what you need. And Tricia here was my first intern, and now sheôs working full-time as of the beginning of the year. And how fun is that?

She spoke about how the team came to be created and shared the following:

> Weôre a little bit of a different organization that way; weôre more of a sales marketing organization. I contract-brew with Summit, and itôs not like I have a brewery. I had the choice to bring our operations piece in house and had an outside consultant doing our books, for all for profit, non-profit. We brought everything in centralized, and weôre bringing everything here now. So we have a core group, and I really see this company always being a very streamlined operation of core people that do a lot.

She offered an example of the team in development:

> God bless Tricia. She called a meeting for all of our new core people, and said weôre going to have [a] telling of the Finneganôs story. So then everybody hears it from your mouth, Jackie, and then everybodyôs on the same page . . . so I did this with all our core team, and then they took notes and weôre building out a chronological history of Finneganôs, and weôre going to do a visual. So you know, Summit does brewery tours. You could come here and have a tour of Finneganôs and have pint, and weôll tell you the story and weôll walk you through how Finneganôs was created.

Laura described the importance of team and the close working relationship among its members:

> The eight is us on the staff right now work together really closely, really collaboratively, and really autonomously. So thereôs one thing that I think has contributed to the success of the organization, it hiring. I mean, the staff is incredible in the level of buy in to mission and to the vision, and it's extremely high. So I think thatôs our sort of buy in to a common set of shared values and sense of optimism and fun about what weôre trying to do. It is really important to all of us.

Susan shared another perspective on the topic:

> What excites people here; what is our capacity and our capabilities. And not like, pretend to lead somebody through it, but not really go to that place, and then go to a place with a group of people that can really own it and be like, theyôre social entrepreneurs. Theyôre the ones that have engaged, and they have recognized theyôre the ones putting their heads down on the desk and theyôre going, ñoh s

> ____. We've got to do this now?' . . . Now how do we engender that in the organization itself?

Susan spoke further of the commitment of the team members who also are social entrepreneurs:

> To give that much of your life to something which, Tim and I know how much it takes, and then not to recognize them . . . this person standing next to me has a different title. You know, whether it's Alex or Diane or Caroline . . . these people are all social entrepreneurs; they all play a role in this organization and they know what was at risk, and they took on a certain level or responsibility that wasn't agreed, but you know . . . they're founders of Eureka recycling, and they feel very confident to go out and say that publicly.

Tim spoke of the team and its ability to carry the work forward:

> There are a lot of people along for the ride, you know, trying to get this work done. . . . It's really around trying to get people to understand their own empowered selves here. What is it that they are holding? [It] isn't Susan or I holding this, Carolyn and Diana or . . . any of the other the people that are holding this organization. And the challenge is truly . . . to appreciate the value of this place, from their perspective, and then to be willing to step into it and carry it themselves.

Several participants spoke of their experiences of what it was like as their roles changed. The role changes were sometimes idealized and at other times described as challenging. Mary offered:

> There was a point where it took me about five years to reconcile myself to the thought that managing the business was equally important and had as great value, if not more than directly working with the clients. . . . I didn't know how, and I didn't have a coach. I had a little bit of mentoring, but not really anybody, about this. So I would try and leave client work, and then someone would pull me back in. I'd screw it up because I was no longer part of the process, and I would interject myself, and I would just make everybody miserable. And so, it took about five years before I totally stepped out and said I won't do this kind of work anymore. And so I'm thinking about it today, because a customer called today and asked me to call him, which means he's unhappy. I have to be very careful what I do in those situations, because I can mess it up for everybody . . . . I'm getting close to retirement at some point, and we work on succession planning and I think about that. But the reality is the more I work on succession planning and getting the organization in the position where we need to be; how we develop a strong management team, and, it's more fun.

Dan spoke about the future in terms of his role and how he expects it to change:

> After almost 30 years of practice now, I'm trying to decide what's next. You know, what's the next business? . . . I may leave this institution and retire or whatever, but I'm intending to do other things, and I'm trying to decide what will that will be, most of it with respect to the community. So would I go into government service, for example? Leave the hospital, and maybe after almost 28 years on the pollution control board, maybe I should become the commissioner of

> the Pollution Control Agency . . . to look at a number of these issues where you can work on administration, to try and do some more things. . . . Policy is important. I mean in state government . . . for how the state will invest its resources. . . . Iôve tried to have my kids understand about public service, public policy. Its very important and all those kind of connections.

Laura offered an example of how Springboard is trying to shape its role in the community. Her comments as the leader seem to reflect that intention:

> I think to some degree, we are trying to figure out how to have our cake and eat it too. Se we are very much in the testing and prototyping phase right now. We feel like this community organizing and community engagement strategy, to help communities grow their own resources that are permanent and local, and helping [to] build communities that value artists for their contribution. That really is, how do we increase the impact, verses just parachuting into a neighborhood?

Susan spoke of a formal changing of roles in the recent past that had been planned for some time:

> I initially had the CEO title. . . . I was kind of in that place at that time, and saw the vision in the future. The recent change in the structure, Tim is just doing; what he used to do, because he is directly managing some of the people. I just need to change my role from where I am in my life, and also my ability with the organization . . . from the position I was in for 10 years. . . . In a lot of ways, our relationship has been transitioned; it has transitioned all the time. Itôs a transition that we have been working on for years, and it just didnôt happen in March. Itôs something that we knew, and weôre headed for, for three years.

Tim spoke of the impact of the changing role and its importance in moving the organization forward:

> I think it was a bigger transition for the organization, and for people outside of the organization that it was for Susan and me, conceptually . . . and emotionally. Any time you go through that transition, thereôs people who hold you in different places. . . . The idea of co-leading, or having an organizational contemporary; somebody to do it with was incredibly important to me.
>
> Organizationally to move forward, you always have to have vision. You have to have vision of where you're going, and we've moved from an organization of ten people, to 110 people. And to keep that moving, both on a daily basis and moving forward, itôs different that it was when youôre originally plotting your course. You know 10 years ago with 10 people . . . we need to look at our space, our place; how it is that weôre an organization we can be most effective. And it unbound Susan from the shackles of the daily administration and representation of this organization, and to broaden her view by shuffling the cards a little bit. This is paramount for the effectiveness of the organization . . . and allows us to continue to co-lead and move an organization forward.

Susan also offered another perspective on the changing roles of leadership within organizations:

> I think what is going on in a lot of these . . . new companies, or what ever, theyôre really like partnerships. And there might be somebody who acts as spokesperson and stands up and does this. . . . I look at these companies; theyôre deeply

partnered in this. Then Iôm sure, later on there will be a book on *Start 1*, you know? I really had this whole line, because the bookôs going to make money too.

Jacquie referred to a challenging time as she saw both the need and experienced a change in roles:

> [The year] 2010 was really hard. I would say it was the most difficult year, other than like the beginning years where I was just like starving, and had no money. But just emotionally, just giving away big pieces of my work, managing people which I really donôt like, Iôm a very much hands off, hereôs what were trying to do, hereôs the vision, letôs go get it done. Everybody go . . . itôs been a real year of adjusting for me.

She later offered additional comments about her changing role:

> It really is a really challenging thing to do. And I have a coach and she has been really good. . . . She said after our first meeting, and we went through everything, she said, ñJackie, weôre way too in the weeds, youôve got to pull yourself out. You gotta start pulling yourself back from and have the vision for the company instead of being so in there. You canôt see it and, you really have to do bothò, and I find that transition challenging. I do.

All of the entrepreneurs in this study spoke about the aspects of looking forward, and none had offered a perspective about what would happen if their venture would not survive. [As stated earlier, it was not until the time of the interview that I learned Laurie had recently closed her business and on the day of the interview had accepted a job.] She said:

> Luckily, Iôm taking a job with a very entrepreneurial venture within a big company. . . . Itôs like a digital green stamp program which rewards people for buying green, and itôs tied into another program which rates products. So it's good, I mean itôs really good, but it was very bitter sweet because if I wasnôt writing this screenplay, I donôt know if I could, can let go.

She also shared the experience of the transition to closing her venture. She offered:

> The hardest thing was to have people say, ñno, they didnôt want to refill thisò. They didnôt want to try this with me. That was difficult, and eventually right before I sold the brand, they took my machine out . . . and that was the first machine, and that was just heartbreaking. That machine was doing really well, and it wasnôt about the people refilling. . . . There were service calls, and this and that. Well, you know, that I fix the machines now, I do. There are still 10 out there. Theyôre like my babies, and theyôve been out there since 2003, some of them, and they're just still doing the work, you know?

Sustainability

Participants spoke about different aspects of sustainability of the enterprise. Some participants shared their perspective on the commitment to mission by all of the organization staff as part of sustainability and offered differing perspectives on the role of leader in sustaining the organization in the future. Participants also described the importance of the business model in sustainability, while other participants expressed concern about ways to sustain the enterprise in the future. Financial sustainability was often mentioned.

Mary shared:

> At the core, one of the things that have been so interesting is that our staff has always been committed to mission. You know, there are organizations where youôre committed to the leader. . . . I mean, I think they hold me in high regard, but mostly if would you ask people why theyôre working here, itôs because they are committed to the mission, and most of then can speak it; they understand, and everybodyôs there for one purpose.

Doug spoke about the role of the founder, and how that role is related to sustainability:

> The reality is, that no venture really can do well just on the strength necessarily of the individual founder . . . I mean, there might be something like an Apple or Microsoft that comes along once in a lifetime . . . where society deems it to be such a highly valued enterprise, that they just buy anything related to it. It generates its own business and its own life as a result of it. Thatôs pretty rare. In the social area, itôs very difficult because there are lots of people competing to different things for their community. . . . I think you have to network, you have to develop a relationship, you have to develop commitments from other people; you have to design it in such a way that there's strong input . . . . . So the hardest part is making a case and sustaining that. But once itôs made, then we get people who are pretty passionate about it.

Doug continued with another perspective on sustainability:

> I would say the real entrepreneurship has the social tie, has to be thought through from a pure business perspective. . . . You canôt have one without the other.

> You've got to figure out how you're going to get the money to do it, and how you are going to sustain it. . . . Otherwise it will go away. and people will lose interest.

Hussein envisioned a potential change in leadership of the future to sustain the organization in the future. He said:

> I know the next person who will be leading it; it will be different than me. Many, many ways for sure. But hopefully. there will be the benchmark. Success will be in a very entrepreneurial way, not stuck for one idea. . . . I hope whoever ends up with my position would say this is where we used to be doing and . . . I hope somebody will say, ñforget about the same: I'm running the show; I'm gonna go this wayò. I'm confident with that.

In looking to the future, Mary described how having metrics helped the organization become sustainable:

> We collected some data, and it just so happened that if we provided training and technical assistance and we lent somebody money, and we lent to the hardest to serve, they had a better survival rate than people who just accessed our technical and training systems . . . We started thinking strategically about lending, and we make some money doing that. So it's building that business that generates money.

Jacquie also shared as part of her experience the need for increased metrics as important to sustainability:

> Its become really clear to me in our ten year anniversary . . . we tried to calculate the social impact we've had over the last ten years, and it was so frustrating. Because we've given to dozens and dozens of organizations over the

> past, we asked them, ñokay, with that grant from Finneganôs, what was the impact we hadò? And it wasnôt good enough. We have got to have metrics where we can say thatôs exactly what we did. Youôve got to be able to say, you donate $25, and five kids have a bed. So that metric piece that Ashoka has done . . . we need to go in that direction.

Marnita shared additional comments about the two approaches to her work that would support sustainability:

> So the first thing we are doing is the welcome . . . . Itôs really the feast, the questions, the guest list, and we are going to build it all into do-it-yourself modalities. . . . We want to put intentional social interaction directly into the palms, the hands of the consumer. On top of that, we really want a launchable hospitality brand.

Hussein shared two examples that illustrate how sustainability is part of his goal and business model:

> So my goal was that, how do you create a sustainable model where you provide the services to the community they cannot afford otherwise.

He described the importance of the coffee shop as part of the business model, saying:

> Now the coffee shop, that has been around for about three months now. Our idea was that it had to be one of the best coffee shops in this neighborhood. And in a sense of what we mean by that; a place thatôs family friendly, welcoming, beautiful food, affordable to the students. But thatôs what the community sees. Behind the scenes, whatôs really happening is really that, how do you really

manage a deli where you can make money at it? Itôs essentially something we need to do.

Mary related another example of the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund business model and how it supports sustainability:

> We sell our curriculum now; it is used in 38 states and three foreign countries, by colleges and also to some universities, as well as community colleges. . . . Weôre developing some new products that we sell in the market place that are going to have good value. I actually tried to kill the business a couple of times . . . and I think we generated 125,000 [dollars] from our little side business last year. It has a very particular niche, and it s very highly regarded. There are four curriculums that people in our industry tend to know about, and ours is one of them. And ours is the only one that doesnôt have a foundation behind it. . . . . It was strategic in some ways to be part of a national perspective for us, and it doesnôt hurt. . . . Its part of our national visibility, and now we're making some money, so itôs a good investment.

Social entrepreneurs spoke further about how they are thinking about the future and taking action to support sustainability. Jacquie expressed some concern regarding a hesitancy to describe her organization as thriving:

> I havenôt done that yet, because I still feel like, you know, donôt gooch it. . . . I just get a little bit scared about cash flow things and adding staff, and so now Iôm really investing in the company to make this for the long haul, and be able to scale everything that weôre doing so that its efficient. Itôs scalable, and I still have those

tensions . . . but the good news is, I do have a tendency, and Iôve been told that I donôt think big enough.

Susan spoke of the importance of wanting to be prepared for the future and shared:

How to be the organization that's going to be the most benefit in the future and in the moment. I think the ones [social entrepreneurs] that are successful are better at that. . . . I think together, we have the skill around that . . . beyond this is where we need to go, and this is the end of that. But I've already more iterations in mind possibly down the road . . . and based on different strategies . . . some people really get stressed out by that, you know?

Tim responded:

Well, I actually see that if we donôt do that, weôll end up like, this is kind of my East coast thinking, that we'll end up like GenoôsÊ , which came at the time like Burger KingÊ and McDonaldôsÊ . In Philadelphia, they all came at the same time, and GenoôsÊ disappeared because GenoÊ got stuck. The GenoÊ giant and didnôt keep up, looking at what was ahead, what they needed. Bad example, but I mean, we've got continue to look forward.

Barbara related a perspective of the future that indicated a concern about the future, and how to sustain the model:

You know, now its 10 years later. I have these two stores, but I havenôt done any franchising yet, and thatôs really the scalability of the model. . . . So you know that thereôs this piece of me that is struggling with, what if I donôt fulfill that part of the dream? . . . I know that as of next year, having given away $1,000,000 in

> this community is a huge accomplishment, and I really feel good about that. But the vision is bigger than that. . . . I had a good exit strategy in the original plan, but it didnôt work our because of this inability to get this piece of the model really going. I had felt that one of my two children would fall in love with this, and want to take and run with it. And thatôs not true. Itôs not the love of their lives. Theyôre really proud of what Iôm doing, they brag about me all the time. But itôs not the love of their lives . . . so as I look at hiring opportunities, one of my qualifications Iôm looking for in a manager or a district director is to manage the two stores; their interest in a potential ability to take over, to buy me out and to keep this baby goinô.

Marnita shared her view of sustainability that called for personal investment based on a perspective of capacity:

> I have been working on a notion that the economy is supposed to be a tool to us, and somehow we have become a tool of the economy. I think that is the downfall of our civilization. I have another dastardly thing; expect more, pay less. . . . I always thought that I was supposed to put in double what I was drafting. At all times, what society required is that not everybody can put in full amounts, so that you need a certain number of people who can put in more, because not everybody can put in everything. So those of us who are talented or had extra capacity were mandated, actually, to put in extra capacity. When did we start to believe that we were supposed to get more while putting in less? If eventually we all do this, all of us extract more than we opt in, what are we leaving as a legacy?

Laura spoke about the changes in the community that can potentially support

sustainability. She described the changes in the neighborhood and the potential impact on the future, needing a model that remains flexible to be sustainable:

> The light rail is going to end right there, [points out the window] so I think that has pushed the neighborhood to a critical point that is going to be the best thing that has ever happened . . . or itôs going to be the terminal station, and no one ever goes that far and the train will roll right along past us. . . . Last year we started the community supported art program agricultural model, and adapted it for arts. . . . How do we make these cross sector partnerships; how do they build systems of support; how do they engage in planning and political and community processing, that is outside their area of practice? Lowertown happens to be in place right now where we can test some of those ideas, but is a part of what we could do regionally and nationally. . . . It is about increasing the impact; sustainability and scalability. There are now a lot of people who want something and want to . . . work with us, which is a great luxury, but also means we need to get out in front of that and set a process . . . so we donôt get pushed off mission again. . . . How do you scale the impact without growing the infrastructure that much? I think [this] is different from a lot of social entrepreneurs who come at it from a much more business related perspective, where the goal is to really have a national organization that has [a] satellite office, and creates the infrastructure and partner agreements. . . . . We feel like part of what is good and effective is this work of customizing and tailoring the culture, because the dangers are sort of inherent in a non-profit structure growing a huge infrastructure; it would break whatôs good about what we do.

Tim spoke of the commitment to sustainability of the mission of the organization and how he believed its work needed to live beyond any individual:

> What we have founded is an organization that we believe in, [and] the power of [its] effectiveness and it has mission that we want to see accomplished . . . and I donôt necessarily see myself being here at the moment of it accomplishing that mission. . . . That mission could be five years down the road, or that mission could be 20 years down the road. The organization is capable is doing that . . . [but] if it becomes reliant upon an individual and just one individualôs vision, then it can be easily blinded and easily stopped. So I think as Susan is talking about, weôve got to continue to develop people to really own it, and put their head on the table and in those moments of recognition, and to develop them to the point they hold the vision. They hold it they cannot stop . . . they hold it so deeply that the organization will continue to meet the needs, to accomplish the vision with or without me.

Summary

In this chapter, I described themes related to the aspects of looking forward category for the social entrepreneurs. While the previous two chapters focused on the origins of social entrepreneurship in the individual, followed by the aspects of living the life, this chapter presented the experience of becoming aware of their roles as leader; the nature of how they developed teams; experienced the changing roles of the social entrepreneur; and finally, their thinking and concern about sustainability of the endeavor.

Participants all spoke to some aspect of the role as leader. Several shared their evolving understanding of the role of leader and how important it was to the organization.

They recalled instances where they needed to move beyond the role of entrepreneur, and focus more on leading others. Participants spoke to idealizing what they thought a leader was, and in their repositioning, they expressed concern that they needed to keep learning. Others expressed confidence that leadership and team development was key to sustaining the organization.

As social entrepreneurs, most had a role in founding the organization or venture. The majority expressed awareness that the survival of the organization cannot be based only on the founder, and described a need to infuse the mission and commitment more broadly. They seemed to identify fragility in the organization's future if this diffusion did not occur. Leadership was also a new and learned skill for several, who shared learning activities and commitment to this new role. Participants also expressed a view of leadership that seemed to challenge them to define new role, and in one organization, the concept of shared leadership as a given was described.

Teams as a concept and organizational structure were expressed in a variety of ways. Social entrepreneurs sometimes only spoke in terms of ñweò as the key force of the organization, and shared examples of team led activities. Other participants described the nature of teams as peripheral, or as a means to support their individual goals for the organization. Participants frequently mentioned the changing nature of their roles within the organization. At times this role change was desirable and comfortable, some changes were planned and thoughtful, and at other times, they were uncomfortable. In one instance, a participant had just shut down her venture after nearly ten years, and the unexpected nature of that change was expressed in powerful language.

The topic of sustainability emerged in several ways: Several participants shared their approaches to keeping the venture sustainable using a variety of business models and the need for metrics to accomplish this. Others spoke of future endeavors and the need to keep evolving to find new ways to be sustainable.

The following chapter will present a post-literature review that explores how that literature discusses themes that were presented in the findings. I will present my summary of the study in Chapter 8, and reflect on how these findings interact with the experience of this study. In Chapter 8, I will also present recommendations for further study and practice.

CHAPTER 7

POST-ANALYSIS LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of the literature pertinent to the themes from Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Because this field is ñpoorly defined and has fuzzy boundariesò (Mair & Marti, 2005, p. 36), this review is inclusive but limited. It includes knowledge sources in entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, HRD, and leadership, to present the most relevant and applicable fields of study to understand the experience of social entrepreneurs. Mair et al. (2005) argued that the ñcommon feature of emergent fields of research is the absence of clear theoretical boundaries and the need to coalesce thinking from other disciplinesò (p. 40). Literature was reviewed in three categories: origins of the participantsô work as social entrepreneurs; what it is like to live the life of a social entrepreneur; and what social entrepreneurs consider as they look forward. The themes are presented as they emerged in the analysis.

Origins of Social Entrepreneurship

Two themes emerged from the text regarding the origins of social entrepreneurship. The first theme revealed that personal experience served as a means of preparation that influenced how and why the participants chose the work of social entrepreneur.

Personal Experience as Preparation

Participants related how personal experiences were important factors that impacted their work as social entrepreneurs. In relating these experiences, they shared how the experience provided the opportunity to identify, understand, and develop a commitment to a particular issue that became the nexus of their social endeavor. Formal

education, the nature of employment, life experiences, and relationships were identified as methods of preparation. Important to social entrepreneurship in this literature review was the discussion of opportunity identification.

Austen, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern (2006) compared and contrasted social and commercial entrepreneurship and discussed how social entrepreneurs monitored the context of their environment to identify opportunities. Baron (2006) reflected on the ñvalue of information gained through rich and varied experiences that can be a major plus in terms of recognizing profitable opportunitiesò (p. 105). Tang, Kacmar, and Busenitz (2009) recounted Kirznerôs later work (1999) and noted that alertness can inspire action as a result of scanning the horizon. Referring to the importance of opportunity recognition for entrepreneurs, Shane (2000) discussed how in the process of becoming an entrepreneur, ñthe discovery of prior knowledge has several implications for individuals seeking to become entrepreneursò (p. 466). Entrepreneurial alertness (Kirzner, 1997) refers to ñan attitude of receptiveness available by hitherto overlooked opportunitiesò (p. 72). Participants used their prior experience and related its impact in their discovery of opportunity which is supported in the literature. The key difference is in the nature of the opportunity.

Haugh (2007) described an early stage of opportunity identification within a community/society when one or more persons perceive opportunity that arises from ñpersonal experience, tacit knowledge, intuition, environmental forces, societal changes, or market failureò (p. 173). Guclu et al. (2002) described the opportunity creation process of social entrepreneurs, noting that personal experience can motivate, inspire, or serve as the source of dissatisfaction to create new approaches. They found ñrelevant experience

does not always have to be in the same field in which the new venture would operateò (p. 2).

Roper and Cheney (2005) suggested that individuals who create socially oriented business ventures can use their wealth of experience and social entrepreneurs who work in private social entrepreneurship, can draw upon the value of their business experience. Hills, Schrader, and Lumpkin (1999) identified the importance of the creative process in opportunity recognition. They referenced Wallace (1926) who first introduced the stages of the creative process that included ñpreparation, incubation, insight, and evaluationò (p. 216). Similarly, Monilor and Attaran (2008) described the stages of preparation, incubation, insight, evaluation, elaboration, and entity formation in applying a creativity model to opportunity identification.

In this study, participants discovered opportunities as a result of their varied experiences. They described how this past experience served as preparation and was a method to gain mastery. Prior and current experience built confidence.

Segal, Borgia, and Schoenfield (2005) cited Bandura (1986), indicating that in entrepreneurship, self-efficacy or the confidence to accomplish what you set out to do develops through four processes, one of which is mastery gained by repeated performance accomplishments. The ñmost dependable source of efficacy expectations are (sic.) based on oneôs own personal experiencesò (Bandura, 1977, p. 81).

A study of six social enterprises in the UK (Spear 2006) found that entrepreneurs had small business experience prior to the social enterprise referenced in their study, or they had transitioned to social entrepreneurship from a similar line of work. This contrasted with the current study in which only one of the social entrepreneurs had a

history of prior small business experience. The social entrepreneurs described by Spears did, however, have experience in their field of interest, but neither as self-employed persons nor working in the field as a hobby.

Sharir and Lerner (2006) discussed the importance of knowledge and previous managerial experience for venture performance. They found 10 of 13 successful entrepreneurs had prior managerial experience. Hoogedorn, Van der Zwan, and Thurik (2011) discussed the importance of preparation in researching overall business performance. They argued that, if you had no prior business experience, you were more likely to be engaged in starting a social entrepreneurship venture and less likely to survive the earliest stages of the new business This finding contrasted with earlier work by Grilo and Thurik, (2005) and Van der Zwan, Thurik, and Grilo, (2010) where perceptions of administrative complexities, not lack of information and financial difficulties, were the major barriers.

In summary, references in the literature supported the theme that experience was key to the work of social entrepreneurs. The literature captured the presence of this theme in general terms but did not offer the rich descriptions that were shared in this study. I was unable to locate any studies that disagreed with the importance of experience.

Impactful events and scenarios.

Eight participants in the study described specific life experiences or events that were important. Gardner and Barendsen (2004) reflected, ñLike many of us, social entrepreneurs have deep-rooted beliefs, like many of us these beliefs are formed earlyò (p. 44). Early work by Guth and Tagiuri (1965) reported that ñadult values are usually the interplay of (a), what s/he learned from those who reared them and (b), their particular

individuality and the timesò (p. 125). Prahbu (1999) suggested that backgrounds of social entrepreneurial leaders are varied, ña trigger event in a present career can shift intention to social entrepreneurial leadershipò and noted that it ñis usually a multi-causal effectò (p. 143). Roberts and Woods (2005) offered a case study portraying a social entrepreneur who transitioned a bad business experience into a project that led transformative social change. A study by Braun (2011) identified six major themes common to social entrepreneurs that included: a crisis or event that triggered change; deeply rooted beliefs about themselves; and early childhood influences of parents. A study by Frazier (2009) of 16 social entrepreneurs who had been named Ashoka fellows, identified nine themes of influential past experiences, prior to the fellow pursuing social solutions. The specific themes were not available for release. In support of this finding, Dhesi (2010) suggested that a disposition for social entrepreneurial activity ñmay be the manifestation of oneôs own early socialization process-influence of family, peers and associationsò (p. 706).

In summary, references in the literature confirmed that impactful events or scenarios were a component of the genesis of social entrepreneurship and supported the theme.

Awareness of community need.

All of the participants provided examples where individual situations helped them become aware of a community need. The examples of need were local, regional, and societal.

Shaw and Carter (2007) conducted a study on the entrepreneurial process of social entrepreneurship. The results suggested social entrepreneurs are greatly motivated by

their social aims, and the networks of social entrepreneurs were important to identify local need. They further posited that ñfor most social entrepreneurs, the recognition of a gap in the provision of services of an unmet social need had been the key driving force in their creation and developmentò (p. 426). Korner and Ho (2010) suggested that social entrepreneurs typically addressed areas of unsatisfied social needs, or create new social opportunities that the public or the private sectors have failed to address.

The literature referenced differing approaches on how needs are exposed. Wilson (2009) suggested that one can identify two broad models of social entrepreneurship in the literature. While the focus in the US literature is on the individual entrepreneur, the UK primarily focused on how social need is met by the mobilization of communities.

Three social entrepreneurs in this study worked within existing organizations to create a new entity, or to transform a current entity in response to a community need. Hemingway (2005) introduced the concept of a ñcorporate social entrepreneur who may identify opportunities for or champion socially responsible activity within the organizationò (p. 244). He advocated for a qualitative approach that can uncover meaning and contextual insight into the unique situations. Seelos and Mair (2005) suggested that ñindividual entrepreneurs are usually much better than companies at scanning for opportunities and building up grassroots effortsò (p. 243). They believed inspired entrepreneurs create new solutions based on local needs rather the centralized assumptions of large institutions.

The literature commented on the need for increased social entrepreneurship because of the impact of decreasing public expenditures on the provision of social services (Sharir and Lerner, 2006, Mair and Marti, 2009 and Thompson et al., 2000).

Social entrepreneurship is one response to social and environmental demands and supply side effects (Nicholls, 2004, 2006; Mair et al., 2006).

Gibb (2000c) argued for greater awareness of entrepreneurial response in the academy and society because of the ñcomplexities and uncertainties necessitating an entrepreneurial response in all walks of life, not just in the business environmentò (p. 244). He challenged the academy and society to create an enterprise culture in the environment.

In summary, the literature was supportive of the finding that identification of community needs is important to social entrepreneurship. Three participants in this study identified the failure of the current system as one of the reasons that their endeavor was necessary. The literature further suggested that acknowledging the needs and broadening awareness of community need is important.

Vision of what would happen if the change were made

Each of the social entrepreneurs in this study described their vision for change unique to their situation, and the importance of communicating their vision for the future.

Hoogendorn et al., (2011) reflected ñit is the intention and relative importance of social value creation, as opposed to economic value creation, that defines social entrepreneurshipò (p. 4). Waddock and Post (1991) recounted the work of Benis and Nanus (1985) and Burns (1978) in describing three central leadership characteristics necessary for large-scale social entrepreneurship. The social entrepreneurs who serve as catalysts take extremely complex situations and craft that complexity into a vision that is able to change attitude. The vision they created had strongly associated values, and ñsocial entrepreneurs dealt with problem complexity by offering a super-ordinate or

overarching goal (the vision) and tapping into their personal resources (credibility) (p. 394).

Dees (1998, 2001) identified five essential characteristics to successful social entrepreneurship that include a ñheightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes createdò (p. 4). Dees focused on the social entrepreneur as an exceptional leader, but Thompson, Alvy and Lees (2000) argued that social entrepreneurship is better described a combination of different kinds of individuals that complement each other, or when ñentrepreneurs or entrepreneurial people are linked up with a visionary idea or opportunityò (p. 132).

Krueger, Reilly, and Carsrud (2002) described how intentions are the best single predictor of planned behavior, concluding that ñintentional behavior helps explain why many entrepreneurs plan to start a business long before they scan for opportunitiesò (pp. 410-411). Thompson (2002) recounted how social entrepreneurs make four key contributions, including establishing vision or declared their intention. Modifying the contributions of Sykes (1999), Thompson described social entrepreneurs as ñenvisioning; clarifying a need, gap and opportunity; engaging the opportunity with a mind to do something about it; enabling or ensuring something happens by acquiring the necessary resources and enacting . . . ; championing and leading the project to a satisfactory conclusionò (p. 416).

Bird (1988) developed a model of intentionality that incorporated an entrepreneur's personal history, current personality, and abilities. Bird argued that the ñcreating, structuring and sustaining of organizations are based on the entrepreneurôs personal ideas and experiences . . . ò (p. 451). Boyd and Vozikis (1994) elaborated on

Birdôs model of entrepreneurial intentionality, suggesting that ñindividual self-efficacy . . . influenced the development of both entrepreneurial intentions and actions or behaviorsò (p. 63).

While establishing the vision is important, the social entrepreneurs in this study also described the importance of communicating vision. Dhesi (2010) indicated ña successful social entrepreneur is able to articulate objectives of social entrepreneurial activity clearly and put them across different sections of community through face-to face informal discussions as well in large community groupsò (p. 712). A study using an analysis of social discourse by Parkinson and Horwarth (2008) reviewed the texts of in-depth interviews of 20 social entrepreneurs as compared to language expressed by individuals in both the British National Corps and commercial entrepreneurs. They found that social entrepreneurs used language that suggested a pre-occupation with words that described social, local, and human concepts. They included words that referenced groups and affiliations and noted terms of helping and hindering.

The attention to language was supported by Chell (2007) who described how entrepreneurialism is about the social construction of reality that envisioned possible social and economic futures. She later references Kent and Anderson (2003) who describe the ñvery essence of social entrepreneurship as the capacity to connect with social and community values that through adept networking, the potential is recognizedò (pp. 16-17). Parkinson et al., (2008) noted that social entrepreneurs were much more likely to use the term ñweò when talking about their work as compared to the other groups who used the term ñIò more frequently.

In summary, individuals in this study identified a theme of creating a vision that resonated positively with the literature in the areas of setting vision, communicating their intention, and being able to identify what would happen if the change they hoped for was made. It also offered support on the role of entrepreneurial intention, and noted the use of the collective voice, or ñwe.ò

Self-Knowledge

The literature offered fewer examples of how social entrepreneurs represent their self-knowledge compared to the frequency that self-knowledge was shared in this study. The literature primarily reported how others define them and presented studies that discussed traits and characteristics.

Elkington and Hartigan (2008) suggested that many call social entrepreneurs unreasonable people that are visionaries and risk takers. Several of the participants in this study referenced themselves using these descriptors, and also terms such as creative and driven. Ardichvili, Cardozo, and Ray (2003) suggested successful opportunity identification process incorporates key personality traits that include optimism and creativity. In contrast, Hmielski and Baron (2009) discussed the value of moderating optimism. They asserted ñbecause of the tendency of highly optimistic entrepreneurs to undervalue new or dissenting information, they learn less from past experience than modestly optimistic entrepreneursò (pp. 482-483). They suggested that entrepreneurs who are best able to regulate and direct their own intrinsic optimism were most likely to achieve the success they seek.

The strong sense of optimism was reported by entrepreneurs in this study, but often followed by a self-reflective statement indicating they were aware of this tendency.

Vasakarla (2010) studied behavioral traits of social entrepreneurs to learn what qualities social entrepreneurs need to succeed. Results showed giving importance to human values; taking risk and decisions boldly; optimism; be self-disciplined; and tolerate uncertainty were needed. The two least favored were having a growth orientation and completing the task undertaken. Drucker (1995) disagreed with the emphasis on the personality trait perspective of entrepreneurs. He argued that people who need certainty are unlikely to make good entrepreneurs. He believed that any one who can face up to a decision can learn to be an entrepreneur and behave entrepreneurially.

Kolvereid (1996) studied reasons why individuals preferred self-employment as opposed to organizational employment. The reasons included ñeconomic opportunity, authority, autonomy, challenge, self-realization, and were able to participate in the whole process. . .ò (p. 29).

In this study, participants reflected on preferences and behaviors that characterized their need for independence, their motivations, tendencies toward optimism, and the autonomy needed to activate their vision, showing resonance with the literature.

Tolerance for risk and challenge.

Eight participants in the study offered examples of their tolerance for risk and challenge. Segal et al., (2005) found that an individualôs tolerance for risk had a significant influence on his or her intention to become an entrepreneur.

One of the more unusual studies addressing risk and challenge, McGrath, MacMillan and Scheinberg (1992), used Hofstedeôs framework of cultural perspectives to describe how entrepreneurs fit into the schema of Hofstedeôs 1980 work, *Culture's*

Consequences. While this exploratory study made no mention of the social entrepreneur, ñentrepreneurs have a persistent and characteristic value orientation irrespective of their base cultureò (p. 116). Using Hofstede's categories, the study revealed that as compared to career professionals, entrepreneurs have a higher power distance score, seen as a way of overcoming hindrances; they favored individual rather than collective action; they were prepared to take risks; and tended to have a higher masculine orientation; they are more likely to live to work, rather than work to live. These findings overall supported the experience of most social entrepreneurs in this study.

Douglas and Shepherd (2002) found that attitude, independence and income, affected the expected utility from a career. Those who had higher entrepreneurial intentions were associated with a more positive attitude, less risk averse, and preferred more independence. While this seemed to describe the social entrepreneurs in this study, it is not applicable in the area of income association. Leadbeater (1997) suggested that that while social entrepreneurial leaders are comfortable with risk, they also need to calculate the degree of risk and the appropriate measure of exposure the organizations can assume.

A recent study by Hoogendorn et al., (2011) focused on how risk is related to levels of underperformance by social entrepreneurs. They noted that social and commercial entrepreneurs are risk takers, but previous researchers (Harding & Cowling, 2006; Shaw & Carter, 2007; Weewardeena & Sullivan Mort, 2006) have argued that ñthese two different types of entrepreneurs face different kids of risks . . .ò (p. 2).

In summary, while the research has shown that social entrepreneurs feared personal risks of the non-financial kind, such as losing local credibility, their network, or personal relationships, this was not supported in this study. Risks of financial concern, though not stated as bankruptcy and fear of failure, were found in this study.

Action orientation.

The participants described situations where taking action, undertaking the next step, achieve results or making forward movement, was an important part of their life as a social entrepreneur. They gave examples of a general propensity to making something happen or taking charge.

Parkinson and Howarth (2008) explored the language of social entrepreneurs, finding that language about agency [or the means] for making things happen was found to be prominent and similar to previous research of Nicholson and Anderson (2003). Agency appeared in three ways: use of transitive or action verbs with the other as the object; the dominant voice or tense was active rather than passive; and the social entrepreneur held a "stance as a local knowledge holder and champion holder for the communityò (p. 298). The text also revealed an emphasis on process and action. The authors stated ñthis resonated with Pearceôs view (2003) that many people involved in social enterprise are about ógetting on with it or getting the job doneôò (p. 209). This resonated as participants in this study commonly used these terms in their speech.

Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum and Schulman, (2009) cite Wood (2005) and reflected how ñentrepreneurs often act as if they can *as if* they can accurately forecast future events and bring about a future desired stateò (p. 525). Corner and Ho reflected (2006) an alternative model of entrepreneurial action called effectuation (Sarasvanthy

2001; Sarasvanthy, Dew, Velamuri and Venkatamaran, 2003). Effectuation (Sarasvanthy, 2001) suggests opportunities do not begin with a precise product or service in mind, but with a set of means to address a good idea. He suggested ñthe essential agent of entrepreneurship is an effectuatur: an imaginative actor who exploits any and all means at hand to fulfill a plurality of current and future aspirations . . . ò (p. 262). This finding was descriptive of the social entrepreneur experience in this study.

Corner and Ho (2006) found that collective action among members described how entrepreneurship opportunities are recognized and exploited. This finding contradicted the commonly held assumption that social entrepreneurs are a single actor in the development of the entity. They corroborated Sauters (2002) argument that ñknowledge needed to develop entrepreneurial opportunities is shared across many personsò (p. 654).

In summary, references in the literature captured key aspects of action orientation of social entrepreneurs. The literature is primarily reflective of commercial entrepreneurs on identification of opportunity, approaches to risk and action and the power of intention but resonance exists.

Living the Life of a Social Entrepreneur

Four themes emerged related to living the life of a social entrepreneur. The first theme was structuring the entity with a sub-theme of integrating business and social principles. The second theme described personal engagement and commitment of the social entrepreneur and provided examples of defining or ña ha!ò moments in their work. The third theme elucidated the role of the social entrepreneur as demanding and complex, revealing sub-themes of the impact on relationships and dealing with uncertainty. Theme

four reflected the types of interaction with outside entities with sub-themes of connecting, collaborating and challenging.

Structuring the Entity

Structuring the entity referred to the themes that emerged from participant conversations describing how they envisioned and created the structures and processes of their organization. All of the participants provided examples of creating a structure or process for their business. I introduce this section by noting in the following table the organizational structures in this study.

Table 2

Organizational Structures

Non-profit new start-up	Non-profit, re-purposed or new line of business created	Non-profit with for-profit subsidiary	For-profit with nonprofit foundation	For-profit with social mission

Noruzi et al., (2010) found social entrepreneurship has many different structures, legal formats, and fiscal responsibilities that are locally dependent. They cited Dees (2004) who stated that ñsuccessful social entrepreneurs will use [the] most effective structures, strategies and funding mechanisms to achieve their social objectivesò (p. 17). Gartner (1985) described new venture creation as a ñcomplex phenomenon; entrepreneurs and their firms vary widely. The action they take or do not take and the environments they operate in and respond to are equally diverse ï and all these elements form complex and unique combinations on the creation to each new ventureò (p. 697). There was strong agreement with this finding, as 11 social entrepreneurs in this study worked in five different structures.

Zahra, et al., (2009) presented a new typology of social entrepreneurs based on the theoretical inspirations of three classic theorists; Hayek (1945), Kirzner (1973) and Schumpter (1942). In the typology, each type of social entrepreneurship was inclusive of a broad range of individuals and organizations, formed with different structures and potential for scale. Social bricoleurs [from the word bricolage which means to cobble together] acted on opportunities to address local social needs; they can respond quickly; and have limited ability to address other needs or expand geographically. Social constructionists built alternative structures that governments and business cannot do. Small to large scale, they often provided welcome relief to organizations that need operating expertise. Social engineers created new and more effective social systems. Large scale in nature, they can threaten existing systems as their impact increased. Using the typology of Zahra et al., participants in this study fit the definition of social bricoleur or social constructionist.

Spear (2006) found in six cases of social entrepreneurship in the UK, ñin contrast to the heroic individualistic general view of entrepreneurship, the collective nature of social entrepreneurship is very prominent in co-operativesò (p. 406). Three of the organizations in this study could be considered more collective. Light (2006) argued that the word social entrepreneur is defined too narrowly, with the focus primarily in the individual leader. This perception left out groups, organizations, and the resources and contributions they provide. He offered as an example, venture capitalists that look more closely at the entrepreneurial team instead of the individual leader.

In response to market failures, social ventures at times, started out as voluntary groups (Haugh, 2007). With a new non-profit status, ñthey are able to gather new types of

resources and supportsò (p.165). Hockerts (2006) offered examples using activism, such as church groups and the fair trade movement; beneficiaries of self-help such as Grameen Bank and Mobilty Car-Sharing; and philanthropy driven enterprises that compete in the market place and provide a social service. An exploratory study by Shaw and Carter (2007) found that a diverse set of social enterprise business structures existed in the UK and Scotland including charitable organizations, community trusts and businesses, partnerships, co-operatives, unincorporated organizations, industrial, and providence societies and development trusts.

In searching the literature on the aspects of creating a structure, there were few sources that reflected the actual process. The literature was theoretical in nature and primarily referenced the types of business structure, models for integrating the social and economic intentions of social entrepreneurs, and the uses of each. Dissertations submitted by Duncan (2010) and Gotchall (2010) were descriptive of how social entrepreneurs created their business models, but neither noted a finding that identified structuring as a theme.

Integration of business and social principles.

Eight participants shared rich descriptions, noting how their structure supports the integration of business and social goals. The nature of social entrepreneurs was presented on a continuum of mission driven distinctions as illustrated by Masseti (2008). The continuum ranged from a socially based mission on the far left, to a market-oriented mission on the far right. This approach can be helpful because it presented social entrepreneurs for what they do, rather than what they are; introduced the notion of degree; and accounted for change and shifts.

Table 3

Continuum of mission-driven distinctions

Socially based mission	balanced mission	market-oriented mission
A continuum concept of the social entrepreneur		

Masseti, 2008

Dart (2004) argued that revenue generation provides multiple benefits and provides opportunity to expand the mission. The business-like models proved to be more beneficial when volume levels and efficiency were important. Dart (2004) noted that many refer to business thinking as social enterprise with both social and business goals. He cited Emerson and Twersky (1996) who referred to it as ñthe double bottom lineò (p. 413). Dart suggested the shift to a market principles ñcreates a change in the perception of the organization, or creates a paradox as compared to a mission that is only service relatedò (p. 305). Each of the participants in this study spoke of the need to be business-like in their operations and integrated this perspective into their structures.

Chell (2007) reflected on the discourse of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. Potential culture class could be perceived, if one model of social enterprise focused on the motives that emphasize social outcomes, and the other on earned income from entrepreneurial activities. She characterized Dees (1998) and Tracy et al., (2004), and described ñan alternative model where outcomes are split between the not for profit benefits on one hand and wealth generation to sustain the business on the otherò (p. 14). In further discussion, Chell suggested that social enterprises that rely on mixed funding sources or based totally on commercial revenues, have a double bottom-line that made

them difficult to manage. She related the ñentrepreneurial process is a balancing of social and economic behavior that creates both social and economic valueò (p. 17). This is partially supported by findings in my study with the exception that participants in the main, intentionally structured their organizations to have a double bottom line and did not indicate this was difficult.

Guclu et al., (2002) argued for the importance of a comprehensive framework to fit the social entrepreneur. The framework included a discernment of the desired social impact, a business model that incorporated how the entity will operate, and a viable resource strategy, all located within the operating environment.

While structuring of the entity and including business and social principles in the process was a topic on the minds of social entrepreneurs in this study, there was little evidence in the literature that referenced exactly how this integration is considered and experienced by social entrepreneurs. In sum, the literature provides theoretical knowledge on the concept of structuring social entrepreneurial ventures, supportive of this finding. I was unable to find detailed information that spoke to the experience of the process.

Personal Engagement and Commitment

Ten participants described situations, events, or feelings that described their commitment and how they became and remain engaged in their work.

Barendson and Gardner (2004) reviewed the importance of personal engagement in social entrepreneurship, suggesting ñsocial entrepreneurs not only believe they can make change happen, but they are obligated to do itò (p. 47). They pointed out that a high level of personal engagement sometimes blurred the boundaries between the personal and

the professional. Their research revealed a strong sense of personal obligation on the part of social entrepreneurs to their work and the people it affects.

Bird (1988) explained the importance of intention as related to implementing and sustaining entrepreneurial ideas. In reporting research by other theorists that address a personôs intention or holding an image in the mind, she related how a personôs intentions sustain value or effort despite interruptions (Zeigarnik, 1927 cited in McClelland, 1985) (p. 442).

A study conducted by Sharir and Lerner (2006) identified the most important variable that affected the success of 33 social ventures. They found that of eight variables, ñtotal dedication to the ventureôs successò was the second most valuable variable, preceded by the entrepreneurôs social network (p. 6).

Passion as an element of entrepreneurial activity was addressed by Cardon, Wincent, Singh, and Drnovsek (2009). They challenged the use of the term passion without a theory or definition, and proposed to define entrepreneurial passion to address what it is and what it does. They stated that basic to the concept is: ñ(1) entrepreneurial passion is a consciously accessible, intense positive feeling, and; (2) entrepreneurial passion results from engagement in activities with identity meaning and salience to the entrepreneurò (p. 515).

Roberts and Woods (2005) cited the work of Handy (2002) who said ñpassion is a word that cropped up in every interview, a passion for what they were doing, whether is it was starting a business, creating a theatre company or reviving a run-down community . . .ò (p. 122).

In this study, the word passion was infrequently used, if at all. Participants shared terms such as commitment, dedication, and responsibility in describing a high level of engagement to their work. The representation of passion in other terms was supported in the literature by Cardon, et al., (2009).

Defining moments.

When Corner and Ho (2010) explored how social entrepreneurship opportunities are recognized and exploited, they found a fourth element called ñsparkò emerged as an insight, or moment of inspiration that engendered opportunity development. The insight, however, was reported to be several steps removed from the time the opportunity is developed. This finding was partially supported in this study, because social entrepreneurs described gradual processes of coming to recognize an opportunity.

This finding, however, does not address the ña ha!ò moments of insight or reinforcing clarity that were described by six participants in this study. In contrast, their "a ha!" moments seemed to reinforce the work effort, moving them to the next level, or became an opportunity for recommitment.

In summary, references in the literature discussed the commitment and persistence in the work of social entrepreneurs and supported the findings. I was unable to locate literature that supported the experience of insightful moments noted by social entrepreneurs in this study.

Role is Demanding and Complex

Entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship as demanding and complex work was well represented in the literature. They shared a perception that work impacted

relationships, and described the experiences of dealing with uncertainty, frequently mentioning financial uncertainty.

Certo and Miller (2008) stated that ñsocial entrepreneurs may face more difficulties on mobilizing financial resourcesò (p. 269). They also described how starting a social venture requires identifying sources of funding that are interested in supporting social capital, rather than economic value.

Hoogendoorn, Pennings, and Turik (2009) revealed that several studies in their analysis of empirical research on social entrepreneurship showed that scarcity of resources was an important factor. They cited the research of Sharir and Lerner (2006) confirming ñsocial enterprises are hindered during the start-up phase by the lack of access to capitalò (p. 29). They reviewed the work of Mair and Marti (2009) and argued the ñprocess of making do . . . in the work of social entrepreneurs requires one to continuously make sense of the contradictions, ambiguities and gapsò (p. 431) as they lived in the world of a social entrepreneur.

Relationship aspects.

Several participants in this study described how relationships are affected by demands and complexity of the work. Boyd and Gumpert (1983) affirmed this in a study of stress in small business owner/managers. They reported ñfree from the stress of corporate hierarchies and constraints, these entrepreneurs prize the right to set their companyôs course and are willing to answer for the consequencesò (p. 45). The depth and range of difficulties encountered on a daily basis also revealed a paradox, because entrepreneurs also experienced pleasure from the experience. Boyd and Gumpert (1983) described how entrepreneurs encountered loneliness, isolation, and ñlack of time to seek

comfort and counsel from family and friends. . . . confusion existed in their mind where the business lives and their personal lives beginò (p. 52). Sharing an anecdote, they highlighted one experience where the spouse of an entrepreneur referred to herself as ñthe widowò (p. 52). Boyd and Gumpert (1984) also found that immersion in the business prevents entrepreneurs from activities such as a vacation, even though they could afford to do so. Additional challenges noted were problems managing people and a strong need to achieve. These findings resonated with the experience of social entrepreneurs.

Social entrepreneurs served in multiple roles in their organizations, and faced competing demands. Prabhu (1999) reviewed the complexity of roles that social entrepreneurs hold which include strategy planners, policy makers, and human resource experts. He argued they also face ñrole conflicts between organizational and personal roles . . .ò (p. 143).

Gumpert and Boyd (1984) found loneliness and health problems in owner-managers. Over half reported a sense of loneliness, and of those who reported loneliness resulted in a higher stress score, often accompanied by symptoms of physical stress. A second finding suggested a values conflict existed ñbecause the respondents work hard to portray a positive and confident external presenceò (p. 19). This values conflict was noted by two study participants. Gumpert and Boyd found that solitary activities were preferred outside of business hours, offering a sense of control. The authors noted these same activities ñfurther reduce the personal ties that can reduce lonelinessò (p. 22). Role stress was positively related to burnout (Shepherd, Marchisio, Morrish, Deacon, & Miles, 2010). They argued that burnout has a negative impact on organizational commitment,

organizational satisfaction, and relative perceived firm performance. Chay (1993) noted entrepreneurs reported higher levels of job demand, longer working hours and less time for leisure activities. He suggested that stress happens when people find their perceived stress is threatening, or the ñperceived demand exceed resourcesò (p. 299). He also noted that social support enhanced well-being and moderated the effect of stress, which was noted by several entrepreneurs in this study.

Demands of the role as social entrepreneur regarding stress, loneliness, and burnout in the role of social entrepreneur were moderately supported in this study. While all participants provided examples that may represent stress and burnout and described their roles as demanding and complex, the participants used other terms to describe the demands, each unique to their individual circumstance.

Dealing with uncertainty.

Holding multiple roles also affected the social entrepreneur. Bird (1988) found that the role of entrepreneur doesnôt fit neatly into the standard organization. Entrepreneurs functioned in roles of such as management, leadership, and operations. She asserted that because of their complex roles, they also ñexperience temporal tension differently, in ways that uniquely energize them, color their perceptions, and cue their search for informationò (p. 446).

While the rewards of entrepreneurship are many, according to Boyd and Gumpert (1983, 1984) they did not come without a cost. Shepherd, Machisio and Miles (2009) in their review of literature, found that stress is a widely accepted part of entrepreneurial life. Their review found that limited amount or stress can be helpful, but in excessive amounts it lead to negative physical and psychological outcomes.

In summary, the literature captured the key aspects of the social entrepreneur's role as demanding and complex. While majority of the literature referred to the role of commercial entrepreneur, it was congruent with findings that referred specifically to social entrepreneurship, with one exception. Social entrepreneurs in this study and in the literature reflected stronger concern about financial uncertainty and resource scarcity.

Interaction with Outside Entities

Interaction with outside entities refers to the theme that emerged from participant conversations in regard to how they related to outside entities in their role as social entrepreneur.

The literature described the concepts of social capital and social value. Sandefur and Laumann (1998) indicated that social capital described the value that one can gather from interpersonal relationships. Citing Coleman (1990a: see also Bourdieu 1986; Granovetter 1985; Dukin and DiMaggio 1990) ñsocial capital is accumulated history in the form of social structure appropriable for productive use by an actor in pursuit of her interestsò (p. 482). ñSocial capital (Cope, 2007) involves social interactions and would appear to reside in and between connections to othersò (p. 215).

Social capital was important to resource acquisition and developing alliances (Chell, 2007). She cited Kwaitowskiôs (2004) view of entrepreneurial behavior as incomplete if it did not include the role of social capital. She noted there is nothing in his arguments that assigned the skill of ñconnectedness that ties it exclusively to the economic entrepreneurò (p. 17). Noting Chell and Baines (2000) and Granovetter (1973), entrepreneurs used their personal and social networks to realize opportunity. Chell applied this to social entrepreneurs as well. She concluded that ñwithin the

entrepreneurial process there is a balancing of social and economic behavior that creates both social and economic valueò (p. 17).

Sharir and Lerner (2006) found eight variables that contributed to the success of a social venture. The entrepreneurôs social network was noted to have the most value because the process of mobilizing resources and expertise involves getting others to allocate capital, labor, and effort, to an enterprise that has an uncertain future. A discussion of how networks create value revealed two different paths. In one case the entrepreneur started out depending on the network to which they belonged, and in the other path, they went about creating a network, spending time and resources.

ñSocial capital (Anderson and Jack, 2002) is not a thing, but a process that creates a condition of social capitalò (p. 193) for the effective exchange of information and resources. Because it is construct that only exists between people, it can be visualized constructing a series of bridges that have varying levels of strength and capacity. Anderson et al., (2002) found ñthe strength of a bridgeôs construction serves as the indicator of the amount of traffic-carrying capabilityò (p. 207). Their bridge analogy also revealed the importance of mutuality in social capital, in that ña bridge that needs to be built quickly is required to be built from both sides of the gapò (p. 208).

Participants in the study described the experience of having social capital, but did not use the term.

According to Burt (2000) ñthe social capital metaphor is; people who are connected, somehow do betterò (p. 347). He used the term structural holes to describe the gaps between people and organizations ñHoles are buffers, like an insulator in an electrical circuit. People on either side of the hole circulate in different flows of

informationò (p. 353). He posited that the ability to make connections or bridges between groups that do not know each other, can offer opportunity.

Social entrepreneurs in this study shared many examples of interaction with outside entities, supporting the importance of interaction and use of social capital found in the literature. Its presence was noted in literature on social networks, networking, success factors, opportunity recognition, and social capital.

Connecting.

Connecting with entities outside was a sub-theme of interaction in this study. Eight of the participants described the connections they made in their work that brought them into relationships or situations that were productive, or provided opportunity.

Dubini and Aldrich (1991) found the entrepreneurial process was structured with two kinds of networks that are important to the entrepreneurial process. ñThese personal networks focus on the individual and extended networks that focus on collectives of people and organizationsôô (p. 306). Personal networks that developed in a long-term relationship created value and involved trust, predictability, and the use of voice, making concerns explicit. ñWithin the firm, networks consist of all the relations between the employees . . . and outside of the firm, networks comprise the relationships between organizationsò (p. 309). Granovetter (1973) reported on the importance of strong and weak ties among and within the relationships. Weak ties can be important to integrate groups, and strong ties can be limiting. He indicated that a balance of the two would provide the most value, information, and a variety of information channels.

Networks played an important role in small organizations (Skinner, Pownall and Cross, 2011). Their human resource development (HRD) study of practices of micro-

entrepreneurs [fewer than five employees, often one or two] found socially constructed networks and the internal sharing of knowledge. ñThe potential competitive advantage of micro-SMEs [small to medium enterprises] facilitated through lower knowledge differentials, knowledge redundancy and a more holistic approach . . . is maintained by looking at ego-centric PCNs [personal communication networks]ò (p. 482). While this study only reviewed males who were micro-entrepreneurs in the UK, it supported the experiences of entrepreneurs in this study.

Social entrepreneurs in this study spoke frequently of the importance of their networks to funding, communications, and growth. The importance of these social relationships when maintained and developed, became important assets to the entrepreneur (Ulhoi, 2005). These dynamic social networks had value when the entrepreneur moved beyond self-interest and a narrow focus, and developed collective trust. Like knowledge and learning, social networks became an ñimportant intangible collective assetò (p. 944).

Alvord et al., (2004) found that successful social entrepreneurs have a bridging capacity that allows them to work across dissimilar constituencies in addition to their ability to display operational organization to build effective links with very diverse stakeholders. While this study included national and international organizations with a large scope, their findings resonated with this study because the participants gave examples of building relationships with diverse stakeholders.

Hoogendorn et al., (2010) in their analysis of social entrepreneurship research, explored three studies that revealed the importance of networking skills as necessary to run a social venture. Sharir and Lerner (2006) referenced Aldrich and Zimmer (1986),

Dubini and Aldrich (1993), Roure and Keeley (1990) to describe how members in the social network have power in their positions because actions they can take, determine if the venture was supported or blocked.

Within the venture capital market in the high-tech field, (Shane & Cable, 2002) found social ties were important to gain seed capital. They purport ñsocial ties provide an important mechanism through which information asymmetry is overcome in venture financeò (p. 377) because the entrepreneur knows things about themselves and their opportunities that funders do not know.

Dacin, Dacin, and Matear (2010) argued that conventional entrepreneurship research focuses on factors that are internal and to some extent, controllable by the organizations. Unlike the conventional entrepreneur, the social entrepreneur is highly dependent on these external resources. They stated ñwhile the existence of a social network might be considered valuable, the real value is created by the unique relationships that are formed between the social entrepreneur and the network membersò (p. 49). Austen et al., (2006) argued the network of social entrepreneurs is even more important than to conventional entrepreneurs, because such a large portion of their resources is outside their direct control.

Singh, Hill, Hybels, and Lumpkin (2000) found that specific elements of a social entrepreneursônetwork are important to recognizing opportunity. Examples were: the greater the size of a network, the more information the entrepreneur has access to; weak ties in a network were important because they required less maintenance; and a network built beyond close friends and family had added benefit use, because it provides exposure to new opportunities.

While this literature was based on conventional entrepreneurs, it is applicable to social entrepreneurs if one applies a broad view of opportunity that includes opportunity for scaling, on-going funding needs, and attracting board members.

Prabhu (1999) found that networks and external relations are important factors to establish legitimacy with outside entities, including other organizations and governmental agencies. He also suggested that close networks were important to provide ñmuch needed emotional supportò (p. 143). In a study of Asian social entrepreneurs, Hassan (2005) found ñexisting bonding social capital within groups has been reinforced by bridging/linking social capital catalyzed by social entrepreneursò (p. 13), and suggested that social capital in Asian societies is less visible.

In connecting with others, Bird (1988) described the importance of ñattunement [is] the readiness to send and receive information, influence, or meaning from other sourcesò (p. 450). She described how one form of attunement allows entrepreneurs to make adjustments within their environment, and another form involved the entrepreneurs in networking with external members outside their organizations to gain resources.

Connecting within their personal networks and networking with other organizations was quite important to social entrepreneurs in this study and supported by the literature.

Collaborating.

Five participants spoke of the importance of collaboration to accomplish their goals. Collaboration as a sub-theme went beyond the act of connection, as they described partnerships with outside organizations to acquire resources, or to gain commitment to move their project forward.

Austen, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern (2006) suggested that social value is often created because of resources brought into the organization, and in other cases, greater impact can be had by organizations working collaboratively with other entities. They argued that the social entrepreneur needs to stay attuned to context to ñidentify how to best mobilize resources both internally and externallyò (p. 18).

Social and conventional entrepreneurs both sought investors to provide financial resources, but Austen et al., (2006) argued there is a ñfundamental difference for social entrepreneurs because of the way resources are mobilized and the ambiguous state of performanceò (p. 14). They found financial measures were central for the conventional entrepreneur. This contrasted with the social entrepreneur where there is no central factor, such as profit or return that aligned the actions of all of parties. A large network of strong supporters and the ability to communicate the impact of the organizationôs mission was essential to leverage resources outside organizational boundaries. This resonated with the findings of this study.

Certo and Miller (2008) found that social venture success involves social networking and venture capital fundraising. They recounted Leadbeaterôs (1997) theory that social venturing begins as an individual mobilizes others towards a social goal.

Electronic resources can also support networking and collaboration. Drayton, Brown and Hillhouse (2006) explained how a global sourcing tool developed by Ashoka called *Mosaic*, developed to support cross-pollination between sectors, promoted collaboration and encouraged the broad ownership of finding solutions to international health issues.

While the ñsocialò in social entrepreneurship usually referred to the core mission and benefit to the common good or social goals, Paredo and McLean (2006) expanded Stewartôs (1989) concept of social entrepreneur to include how social entrepreneurship can be ñcarried out by a team or a group of peopleò (p. 64). In these situations, the roles of social entrepreneur were split or shared. This approach respected cultural settings that value collective, rather than individualistic thinking (Peterson, 1988). De Ber (2008) expanded the concept of collaborating, proposing the strength of ties between the non-profit and for-profit organizations form a cross-sector partnership that created social value. Literature that reflected collaboration and collective thinking resonated with experiences of several participants in the study.

Overall, the findings are strongly supported in the literature, because all of the participants in this study described experiences showing how they interacted with outside entities. They described the need to connect and collaborate, and enumerated both the benefits and the processes they used. The collaborating entities varied in their type, and included individual stakeholders, organizations, clients, volunteers, employees, and funders.

Challenging.

Interactions with outside entities presented social entrepreneurs in this study with challenges in their work and potential barriers to achieving their goals. The literature supported this finding in the area of challenges with philanthropy, recognition, and competition for resources.

Among the relationships that presented challenges for social entrepreneurs were those that had a grantee-grantor relationship. Grossman and McAffey (2001) revealed

that fund-raising success came primarily from relationships based on trust. Because the value provided by social entrepreneurs is more intangible, the measurements are more ambiguous, and the consumers/users of the service are usually non-contributors, this presented another challenge. Hartigan and Billimoria (2005) contended philanthropists and foundations that continued to fund demonstration projects with the hope of change in a short time would have ñmuch greater impact by scaling up demonstrably successful social innovations initiated and implemented by social entrepreneursò (p. 21).

Foundations can operate more like venture capitalists to make good investments (Letts, Ryan and Grossman, 1997). They argued that stronger organizations could be built by using approaches that managed risk, developed long-term partnerships, and established performance measures rather than investing in new programs. Heifetz, Kania and Kramer (2004) argued foundations need to move boldly past traditional approaches to support new social change ventures as partners, and less so as authority figures.

In other studies by Kramer (2005) regarding philanthropy, it was suggested that the growth of social entrepreneurial ventures created a need for a new perspective on program evaluation. Traditional funders and social entrepreneurs have different perspectives of how programs are evaluated and how impact is measured. ñTraditional foundations often develop theories of change or a logic model. They fund demonstration projects and use rigorous approaches to measure impactò (p. 1). In contrast, social entrepreneurs seek to drive rapid change, have an interest in scaling, and need capacity-building support to build strong organizations.

As noted previously, funding models, an increasing need for metrics, and the importance of developing trust with external sources of support were reported by the participants as challenges in this study.

Research that focused on the challenges of social entrepreneurship included challenges related to policy. Sud, Van Sandt, and Baugous (2008) expressed concern that social entrepreneurship alone could not be expected to solve the social ills of large-scale issues. Society viewed new solutions, such as social entrepreneurship, as the preferred solutions, but Sud et al., posit that social entrepreneurship was not enough. They argued that pressure of external forces such as legitimacy, structure and politics, morality and institutional isomorphism or replication, restrained the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship.

Hartigan et al., (2005) agreed, arguing ñgovernmental bodies and agencies, with few exceptions have yet to recognize social entrepreneursò (p. 20). In many cases, social entrepreneurs avoided governmental entities because of inefficiency, indifference, and corruption. When collaborating has been effective, the benefits were many. The authors described that in some cases, government support for the social venture was deliberately avoided because it was thought to be more fragile than the private sector. This concern was specifically noted by a participant.

Austen et al., (2006) described the importance of the deal. ñDeals are mutually beneficial contractual relationships between the entrepreneurial venture and all resource providersò (p. 14). They argued the underlying deal between social entrepreneurs and their funders is different from commercial entrepreneurs and their investors. The transactions have value differ in ñkind, consumers, timing, flexibility, and measurabilityò

(p. 14). In harsh times, social needs required increased resources, while social entrepreneurs faced the challenge of heightened expectations of accountability. They also argued that social entrepreneurs have to spend a larger portion of their time on fund-raising. This was noted by several social entrepreneurs in this study.

Social entrepreneurs are faced with intense competitive challenges (Harris, Sapienza and Bowie, 2009). When social ventures do use performance measurement tools, ñmarkets do not always value societal improvements or public goodò (p. 413). They suggested that within the genre of social entrepreneurship, ñnon-profits and philanthropic start ups are subject to intense competitive forcesò (p. 411), though different (forces) from conventional entrepreneurship. This was referenced by two social entrepreneurs, who approached this challenge by finding ways to expand the resource pie.

In summary, the literature supported the findings of this study regarding the nature of relationships with outside entities. An unexpected strong finding in the literature acknowledged the unique challenges or supports from philanthropy, and a need to redesign the model of support and evaluation. The literature reflected this to a greater degree than shared by the participants.

Looking Forward

The following category of themes explores how the findings of this study resonated with the literature as it reviews leadership in social entrepreneurship, aspects of changing roles, team development, and perspectives on sustainability.

Leadership Awareness

Social entrepreneurs in this study made many references to their role as leader. This review incorporated literature on leadership and entrepreneurial leadership, because there are limited sources that specifically reference social entrepreneurs as leaders.

In a general study on leadership, Mackenzie and Barnes (2007) reported underlying consensus on leadership approaches that are dependent on a sense of place or context. Citing Osborn, Hunt, and Jauch (2002) ñleadership is embedded in a context. One cannot separate the leader(s) from the context anymore that one can separate a flavor from the foodò (p. 93). Mackenzie et al., (2007) reviewed and analyzed eleven different leadership approaches. They concluded ñthere are some unstated items of consensus which the cited leadership embrace by either explicitly stating them, or implicitly condoning themò (p. 114). They are: leadership is a good thing, and more is better; leaders are presumed to be rational actors; leaders tend to be solid citizens; they do not actually perform work; they do not ménage technologies. The measure of leadership is leadership, and organizational place is not important.

These leadership findings had little resonance because only two of the seven descriptors ñleaders tend to be solid citizens and a measure of leadership = leadershipò (p.112) describe the experience of social entrepreneurs in this study.

Heifetz (1994) reviewed the prior study and posits that leadership requires adaptation and innovation that extends beyond routine methods and procedures. While Heifetz based his work on the role of public policy leaders who have little direct control, these characteristics appear to resonate in an era of rapid change. Mackenzie (2004) suggested Heifetz ñbroadens our understanding and thinking about leading, surviving and

succeeding in difficult circumstances that require serious adaptive problem solvingò (p. 107). Heifetz indicated that leaders distinguished technical problem from an adaptive challenge; a problem that had no easy answer. Experiences of social entrepreneurs in this study agreed with this approach.

Dees (1998, 2001) described social entrepreneurs as ñchange agents in the social sectorò (p. 4) who adapt, innovate and learn, persist, and have a heightened sense of accountability. Drayton (2005) the founder of Ashoka, characterized social entrepreneurs as pragmatic and results oriented, integrating action and ethics, leading change as social reformers. Drayton is referenced by Dees (2005) as the person who brought social entrepreneurship to the mainstream.

There are two schools by which entrepreneurs are categorized (Gartner, 1990). One is by the characteristics of the entrepreneur, and the other on the outcomes of entrepreneurship. Gartner argued there is agreement that key themes comprise entrepreneurship, including characteristics of the entrepreneur, innovation, organization creation, creating value, profit or non-profit, growth and owner-manager role. It is interesting that these themes offer no representation of the entrepreneur in the role of leader.

A study by the Center for Creative Leadership, (Martin and Ernst, 2005) suggested leadership actions range from individual activity carried out by people in positions of authority, to a collective activity carried out by groups of individuals, communities and organizations who share work. Martin et al., (2005) cited McCauley and Van Veisor (2004) finding leadership as the ñcollective activities of organizations member to accomplish the tasks of setting direction, building commitment and creating

alignmentò (p. 84). Leadership was an ñoutcome rather than a skill or role, leadership can be viewed from a broader and more inclusive lensò (pp. 92-93). This finding reflected the experiences of leaders in this study, but entrepreneurs were not participants in either study reflected above.

Each of the social entrepreneurs in this study served as a founder in some capacity and as a leaders described awareness of this founder role. Schein (1995) found that in groups and organizations, someone takes a leadership role. A group is created, the founding group begins to act in concert, and others are brought in and begin to develop its own history. The founder had major impact on how this happens, and imparted their own biases on how to fulfill the idea. The founder/leader also served a unique leadership function in the organization (Shein, 1995) because they absorb anxiety and risk, integrate noneconomic assumptions and values into the organization, and stimulate innovation. He suggested the ñultimate dilemma for first generation founders with a strong founder generated culture, is how to make the transition to subsequent generations in such a manner that the organization remains adaptive . . . without destroying the cultural elements that have given it its uniqueness . . .ò (p. 238). Seven founder participants expressed similar thoughts about transition.

Bagheri and Pihie (2011) argued that new models of entrepreneurial leadership based on learning and development are needed. They suggested ñentrepreneurial leadership development is a dynamic process of learning from experience, observation, and social interaction and transforming the acquired knowledge through a process of reflection to recognize entrepreneurial opportunities as well as creating novel solutions for challenges crises of leading entrepreneurial venturesô (p. 458).

The most representative work of leadership in social entrepreneurship was a study of seven cases of successful social entrepreneurs (Letts, Brown & Alvord, 2003; Alvord, Brown and Letts, 2004). They found great variety in the backgrounds of the entrepreneurs, noting the ôbridging capacity that enables leaders to work effectively across many constituenciesò (p. 271). In particular was their ability to work with those that might be critical of the initiative. Alvord et al., reported this is consistent with the work of Brown and Covey (1987) and Moore (2000) who found that success in dealing effectively with many different constituencies was important. A second characteristic was the ability to be adaptive. This resonates with the finding in this study where collaboration, adaptation to changing circumstances and working across diverse groups was key to success of the social entrepreneurs.

Prabhu (1999) reviewed the characteristics of social entrepreneurial leadership noting that similarities between the characteristics of entrepreneurial leaders who handle complexity, have intense involvement and show tenacity and persistence. He also referenced Bird (1989) and noted that entrepreneurial leaders ñtend to view their venture events as personal eventsò (p. 142).

Gotchall (2010) used the term ñinspirational leadershipò to describe a study of philanthropist and social entrepreneur, Malcolm Harris. Using the characteristics of inspirational leaders described by the Hay Group, the study discovered additional unanticipated leadership themes of social awareness, ethics and trust from others, sense of self, expecting challenges, being resilient, and uniqueness and spiritual. Social entrepreneurs in this study did not share spirituality, trust, and ethics as themes.

Helm (2007) described non-profit behavior in social entrepreneurship that is different from how social entrepreneurs in this study referred to themselves. He developed a behavioral typology scale to measure entrepreneurial behavior based on non-profit management, economics and strategic management disciplines. The study looked for the distinctive presence of innovation, proactive and risk-taking in non-profit behaviors to find solutions to problems. The solutions of social entrepreneurial organizations showed these behaviors at a higher level than in non-entrepreneurial non-profit organizations. Rangan (2008) suggested non-profit leaders could be challenged to think more broadly and be more visionary, and less concerned about operational issues such as raising funds, coordinating programs and managing their boards.

Much of the social entrepreneurship literature is generated in the UK. Social entrepreneurs in the UK were more likely to be women (Harding, 2006), younger and ñless bullishò than commercial entrepreneur; leading social enterprises that may develop into charities as they became more established. They expressed more positive attitudes in the early stages of the venture, and as they become more experienced, they become more disillusioned and saw fewer opportunities for change. This study found that more educated, older, and employed individuals are running social enterprises. However, there was ñproportionally higher level of social entrepreneurship among young women, ethnic minorities and the labour market inactiveò (p. 22). This finding presented a policy challenge with regard to barriers to capital in the UK.

These UK findings did not resonate with the findings of this study or with any other study I have been able to locate. The findings may be contextually based on the differences in how social enterprise and social entrepreneurship is characterized in the

UK. Another study in the UK found commercial entrepreneurs as leaders can also be seen as ñlarger than life and as mythical heroesò (Nicholson and Anderson, 2005 p. 168). They found entrepreneurs are instruments of their own agency; they are always active and not working as the result of anotherôs agency.

Three participants in this study expressed frustration that the outside world only wished to recognize their individual role as spokesperson and leader, individually feature them in media and not their teams.

In summary, the literature theme of leadership awareness within the experience of social entrepreneurs was partially supported. As noted previously, the characteristics, attributes and behaviors of social entrepreneurs are studied, but references to the social entrepreneur as leader are infrequently studied. With the exception of one person, none of the participants made reference to themselves as a non-profit leader.

There was a lack of overall support for the unstated assumptions of leadership identified by Mackenzie and Barnes (2007). In a surprising discovery, there are few studies in the leadership disciplines or in HRD specifically focused on leadership and entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship.

Aspects of team and role changes.

Each of the participants in this study offered comments about the aspects of team and role changes as they described their experience as a social entrepreneur. I was not able to locate literature on team and role changes in social entrepreneurship.

Several participant/founders in this study discussed the transition to an alternate role supported by the literature. Role changing and the exit of the founder is a critical component of the entrepreneurial process. ñEntrepreneurs often described their

businesses as their ôbabiesô, speak in passionate terms about them, and expressed identification with themò (Cardon, Zeitsma, Saparito, Matherne and Davis; 2002; Dodd, 2002 p. 26), sacrificing time, energy, and resources to create the venture. King (2002) suggested that the majority initiates a venture without thinking about their exit. Specific to commercial venture, the exit is not only an important liquidity event, but also ñmay have a strong psychological effect on the founderò (p. 205). DeTienne (2005) suggested that it is rare that a founder remains in the firm during maturity. He further argued there is a myth that these entrepreneurs expect to transfer their company to a key employee or a family member, but that happened only 20% of the time

Enterprises require a transition from entrepreneurship to professional management. Hofer, (1984) suggested a conceptual stage model is useful in helping an organization moving from a one-person entrepreneurial style of management to a functionally organized team of professionals. The transition process is ñslow because it involves organizational and personal learning and because it is necessary to preserve old strengths while developing new onesò (p. 6).

The literature suggested that founders who lead non-profit organizations presented characteristic differences (Block and Rosenberg, 2002). Growth of these organizations was held back because entrepreneurs who started the organization were skilled at vision and ideas rather than experience and skill in managing organizations, ran their organizations less formally, and were less interested in term limits for board members. They argued that there might be substance to the term ñfounderôs syndromeò (p. 354). They stated use of the word ñsyndromeò suggests unhealthy organizational situations about the imbalance of control over the organization.

Stevens (2003) reported that as the organizations evolved, the foundersô role and personal identify shifts. She suggested that focusing on the personal role of the founder, ñequal attention should be paid to the founderôs early formative influences, his or her resultant adult organizational behavior, and the evolving organizational and vocational context in which the founder operatesò (p. 157).

The literature spoke about the important role of executive directors in the organizationôs success (Drucker, 1990; Cyert, 1990; Young 1987) but the studies did not make a clear distinction between executives who are founders, and those leaders who have not created the organizations

(Gupert and Boyd, 2001) found that in small organizations, there is little room at the top. Additional resources were used to increase sales rather than recruit managerial talent. This made it difficult to fill in the lower levels, and the founders tended to centralize power in their own hands. Sharir and Lerner (2006) expressed concern that that the majority of social entrepreneurs spent insufficient time on the quality of planning and adherence to a business plan broadly formulated by board members, staff, clients and consultants.

Initial successions are a critical stage in an organization's life cycle (Rubenson and Gupta, 1997) because adaptation is the founderôs ability to alter his or her behavior to accompany the different managerial requirements of the organization as it matures. Accepting Hofer and Charan (1984), they stated ñafter starting difficulties have been overcome, the most likely cause of business failure are the problems encountered in the transition for a one-person entrepreneurial style of management or a functionally organization professional management teamò (p. 22). Rubenson and Gupta found that

founders as a group were linked to Sonnenfield's (1998) monarch and generalsô role and Schein's (1983) perception they are key to the organizationôs culture.

The participant experiences in most cases were not supported by the literature. The participants spoke more about the topic of teams, development, and transition more than the literature suggested. However, the literature was not specific to the experiences of social entrepreneurs.

Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the generalized concerns that all of the social entrepreneurs in this study expressed in regards to how the entity they founded would be supported, carried forward or expanded, sometimes referred to as scaling and measured. For purposes of this review, sustainability literature also included perspectives unique to the two social entrepreneurial organizations in this study that are part of the sustainability movement. Sustainability literature was the least cohesive in reflecting the experiences of participants in this study, incorporating many topics as did the participants.

Social entrepreneurs have different founding identities (Simms and Robinson 2006); that of entrepreneur and social activist. They suggested that, if social entrepreneurs do not see themselves first as entrepreneurs, they will miss opportunities. In order to become more self-sustaining, they must be able to change focus, be less dependent on vulnerable funding streams, and use profit-making ventures in order to thrive

Urban (2010) suggested that the definition of sustainability is quite different for the not-for-profit sector. While sustainability vs. stability could result in an organization being financially sustainable, if the organization was unable to garner community support

because of that financial stability, it is not sustainable. This balancing act suggested ñthere may be a danger, considering that the non-profit sector is becoming more business-like, that they may miss out on those audiences traditionally supportive of this sectorò (p. 136).

Alvord et al., (2004) found three patterns of scaling to widen the impact of successful social entrepreneurs. They included capacity building initiatives; developing packages of services that were disseminated to others; and movement building initiatives.

Two of the participants in this study had as their founding reason the broader impact of environmental sustainability, but also had concerns regarding sustainability of the venture. Social entrepreneurship presented one model of sustainable social change (Pezzy, 1989) with a triple bottom line that links business to economic growth, with the third bottom line is environmental protection that produces social equity

Emerson (2006) argued that sustainability needs the introduction of new investment vehicles and strategies to encourage foundations to invest their assets, with the goal of increasing social value. Using mainstream investment tools could support principle and interest returns in addition to the pursuit of social value.

Related to sustainability, Yunus (2004) posited that profitability was important for two reasons. It had to be able to pass on the economic value in search of long-term social goals and pay back investors. Encouraging investors to put their money in social investments offered a dual payback of personal satisfaction similar to philanthropy, and knowing their investment would be returned and could be reinvested. Seven participants in this study spoke in general terms about the investor model.

Leadbeater (1997) described the constraints on the expansion and sustainability of social entrepreneurial ventures. Constraints included the characteristics of the entrepreneurs themselves who prefer fewer processes such as boards and committees; management and analysis skill required in larger more complex organizations; the challenge of succession; and the difficulty in scaling up.

Conflicting perspectives of striving for sustainability vs. self-sufficiency were offered by Boschee (2003). While the non-profit sector has traditionally been ñdriven by a non-profit model that relied on a combination of philanthropy, government subsidy and volunteersò (p. 3), none of the entrepreneurs in this study reported this differentiation. In contrast, they spoke of the need to be sustainable, efforts to be self-sufficient, and most referred to the need for earned income.

Metrics as part of sustainability mattered to social entrepreneurs in this study. The majority worried about it, and the literature spoke to it. They saw metrics as necessary measures as a means to support sustainability. Dees (2008) argued that social impact is difficult to measure in a reliable, timely, and cost effective way. He described how anecdotes and stories are helpful, but systematic evaluation is difficult and questioned how one knows the intended impact is reached. One reason this presents a challenge is that ñnatural selection processes that direct resources to the most promising innovations and away form failed experiments . . . performance evaluation is not valued in the culture of charityò (p. 30). Philanthropy found it easy to support organizations that had a powerful story to tell, but less knowledge about measurable social impact.

Neck, Brush and Allen (2009) considered the importance of performance metrics. ñ*Double bottom line, triple bottom line, blended value and social return on investment*

[for emphasis] are all terms that have gained popularity over the last decade . . . . yet there are no universal measures of social or environmental impactò (p. 18). Financial metrics are important but social ventures need to ñidentify their own social metrics based on mission, industry and ideal impactò (p. 18).

Overall, evaluation and metrics are at an infancy stage of development, and the literature reflected a need for further development. The participants in this study expressed this concern as well.

When social entrepreneurs shared their experiences about sustainability, they also talked about their need to adapt to change to remain sustainable. Light (2009) shared ñold organizations can nurture social entrepreneurship. Creating a socially entrepreneurial organization within an existing structure is no doubt difficult . . . . if they reverse the bureaucratic effects of organizational agingò (p. 22). Three social entrepreneurs in this study created new socially entrepreneurial organizations within an existing structure; seven described adaptation to change.

References to fear of failing as an aspect of social entrepreneurship were made by several social entrepreneurs. Failure in entrepreneurship was not studied sufficiently (Docin et al (2010), citing McGrath (1999) where ñfocus on seeking results in costly errors and diminished opportunities for learningò (p. 51). When failure does occur, Cope (2011) said a gradual healing process was required to get some distance to overcome the powerful expressions of grief. He suggested that failed entrepreneurs could apply their knowledge of failure to other business domains that may not take the form of a new enterprise. In the aftermath of failure, entrepreneurs need to have time for what Meizerow (1991) described this as a hiatus, or a purposeful break for thinking about their failure

before they could re-engage. Failings were categorized as misfortunes or mistakes (Cardon, Stevens and Potter, 2011) and revealed regional differences in how failure was perceived and how failure impacts the entrepreneur. Social entrepreneurs in this study had three years or more post start-up, yet still described their concerns regarding sustainability.

In summary, two themes emerged related to the aspects of looking forward. All of the social entrepreneurs shared experiences describing how they experienced and recognized their roles as leaders, and how this played out in both their present day work or as they looked into the future. While social entrepreneurs saw themselves as leaders, this view is not well represented in the literature. Aspects of team and role changes emerged as a sub-theme, and support for the findings comes primarily from study on founders and role transition. I was unable to find specific references to social entrepreneurs. Sustainability as a theme reflected the participantsô broad concerns on the topic.

Summary

This hermeneutic phenomenological study was designed to learn what it is like to be a social entrepreneur; an individual committed to entrepreneurial activity and social mission. The study used in-depth interviews to gain a better understanding of the lived experience of eleven social entrepreneurs from which themes from the texts provided the provided the basis for an in-depth review of the literature. The purpose of the review was to determine the amount of support or resonance within the literature, relative to what these social entrepreneurs experienced. This study revealed new themes, or presented the opportunity for further development on themes that were incomplete, or had their basis in

the field of entrepreneurship and not specifically in social entrepreneurship. Of note is that much of the literature reflects theory development and definition, but there is a gap in the literature that is absent detailed, experiential knowledge that offers a greater understanding of what it is like to be a social entrepreneur.

The following themes were strongly supported by the literature but could be expanded if incorporated the experiences of social entrepreneurs. They are: personal experience as preparation; impactful events and scenarios; awareness of community need; vision of what would be different if a change was made; the nature of interaction with outside entities and the value of connecting.

Themes supported by the literature that produced resonance but could be advanced if specifically focused on social entrepreneurs were: tolerance for risk and challenge; action orientation; challenging and demanding aspects of the role; personal engagement and commitment; the collaborating aspects of interaction with outside entities; sustainability, including the development of metrics; aspects of team and role changes.

The following themes were identified in the literature, but as experiences, they evoked minimal or modest resonance. These included aspects of risk referring to the loss status or relationship; the importance of prior small business experience Others were the failure of government social systems; the need for a new relationship with philanthropy; and the importance of income for the social entrepreneur.

Themes that were absent or minimally addressed in the literature but experienced by social entrepreneurs were: the process of structuring the entity to integrate business and social principles; the level of self-knowledge and self-reflection reported by social

entrepreneurs in this study; challenging aspects of a complex and demanding role; aspects of leadership awareness and absence of a non-profit leadership reference; the significance of ñahaò moments; practical aspects of team development and transitions and the importance of economic goals, including profit and metrics.

Chapter 8 will discuss findings, recommendations for practice and research, and my personal reflections on the research topic.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the interpretative research study I conducted with 11 social entrepreneurs, who represented 10 organizations. The implications of this study are presented to provide a greater understanding of the work of social entrepreneurs.

I recommend actions to organizations that support, educate and involve social entrepreneurs, and include recommendations for further study related to the experiences of social entrepreneurs. I will also comment briefly on the perspective gained from participants regarding my definition of social entrepreneurship, and will conclude with a reflection of my own experiences in conducting the study.

Research Summary

Social entrepreneurship is a growing phenomenon and increasingly present in the public domain. It is highlighted in the media, discussed in academic literature, taught in college courses, and referenced in the community (Peredo and McLean, 2006; Tracey and Nelson, 2007; Light, 2006). Throughout the preliminary search process, I was unable to locate research whose intended purpose or result was to specifically understand the experience of a social entrepreneur and to answer the question, ñwhat is it like to be a social entrepreneur?ò A preliminary literature review revealed that while there was research on social entrepreneurs, the literature presented findings on the definition of social entrepreneurship, opportunity recognition, entrepreneurship education, characteristics of social entrepreneurs, how to expand or scale up the organizations, developing grounded theory or a series of case presentations on specific social entrepreneurship projects. Research relating to the role of HRD in social

entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in SMEôs (small to medium enterprises) was found to be minimal, and discussed barriers of organizational size and scope to implementing formal HRD practices, arguing for a need for further research.

To gain the understanding of what it was like to be a social entrepreneur, I used phenomenology; a qualitative or interpretive methodology. As a researcher, my first assumption was that those who have the experience can best describe that experience so others can gain greater understanding. I learned the value of in-depth interviews, experiencing how van Manen (1997) suggests that nothing about the experience (in this case, the social entrepreneur) should be taken for granted. This methodology supported my belief of how the world is experienced, and how the world is shaped by the personal experiences of those who live it. The research question of ñwhat is the experience of a social entrepreneur?ò required me to approach the study by gathering information in interviews to create a text. Kvale (2009) asserted that an interview is literally an exchange of views between two persons, and during the exchange of information, new knowledge is created.

In order to gain a greater understanding of a social entrepreneur's experience, I used purposive sampling to identify individuals who met the definition of a social entrepreneur. Prior to the interviews, I noted my assumptions and preconceptions and made a conscious effort to reflect on them prior to beginning the interview. Securing the approval of 11 individuals, I interviewed them, asking the question: What is it like to be a social entrepreneur? In addition to the key question, I followed with probing questions to learn more about their feelings and experiences. After the interviews were completed, the texts were transcribed. Reviewing the texts for themes initially proved to be challenging,

because the participants had widely varying experiences as social entrepreneurs. I re-read the texts several times, and after initially identifying broad categories and preliminary themes, I concluded these were false starts and decided to start over. After a new review of the text, it became clear that initially, the participants spoke about their daily experiences, but also reflected on their starting points and thoughts about the future. This helped me determine that a life-cycle, chronological approach to theme development was a workable framework to present what I understood to be the meaning of the participantsô experience.

After I discerned what I believed to be the most relevant themes and sub-themes, each of the participants received an explanatory letter and a written summary of the preliminary themes in preparation for a follow-up interview. Each participant was asked if the themes and sub-themes resonated or were compatible with their experience. The participants asked clarifying questions, made supporting comments and observations, and overall agreed with the themes. Several participants commented that the themes seemed very typical of their individual experiences, and expressed surprised when they learned the themes were representative of the overall findings. As a result of their comments and feedback, the following theme categories, eight themes, and 13 sub-themes were identified.

<u>Themes related to origins of social entrepreneurship</u>

Personal experience as preparation

Impactful events and scenarios

Awareness of community need

Vision of what would be different if a change was made

Self-knowledge

Tolerance for risk and challenge

Action orientation

Themes related to living the life of a social entrepreneur

Structuring the entity

Integration of business and social principles

Personal engagement and commitment

Defining moments

Role is demanding and complex

Relationship aspects

Dealing with uncertainty

Interaction with outside entities

Connecting

Collaborating

Challenging

Themes related to looking forward

Leadership awareness

Aspects of team and role changes

Sustainability

After the themes were verified, I completed a post-study literature review to determine the level of resonance with the literature from the themes that reflected the participantôs experiences.

Review of Themes and Theme Categories

The interviews are ordered in three categories. The first category ñOrigins of Social Entrepreneurshipò revealed themes of how social entrepreneurs came to do the work of social entrepreneur. Specifically, the past influences, activities and experiences that led them to the work. The second category, ñLiving the Life of a Social Entrepreneurò, described the themes related to the challenges, processes and activities that comprise the day-to-day experiences of social entrepreneurs. The third category, ñLooking Forwardò, reflected themes concerns and issues that were top-of-mind for social entrepreneurs as they look to the future. This study revealed themes expressed by the participants but not in the literature, presented the opportunity for further development on themes that were incomplete, or had their basis in the field of entrepreneurship and not specifically in social entrepreneurship.

The following themes were strongly supported by the literature, but could be expanded if they incorporated the experiences of social entrepreneurs. They are: personal experience as preparation; impactful events and scenarios; awareness of community need; vision of what would be different if a change was made; the nature of interaction with outside entities and the value of connecting.

Themes supported by the literature that produced resonance but could be better understood if specifically focused on social entrepreneurs were: tolerance for risk and change; action orientation; challenging and demanding aspects of the role; personal engagement and commitment; the collaborating aspects of interaction with outside entities; sustainability, including the development of metrics; aspects of team and role changes.

The following themes were identified in the literature, but they evoked minimal or no resonance as experiences shared by the participants, These included aspects of risk referring to the loss of status or relationship from potential failure; the importance of prior small business experience; and the development of a new model of relationship with philanthropy. Others were the failure of government social systems and the importance of income for the social entrepreneur.

Themes that were absent or minimally addressed in the social entrepreneur literature but experienced by social entrepreneurs were: the process of structuring the entity to integrate business and social principles; the level of self-knowledge and self-reflection reported by social entrepreneurs in this study; challenging aspects of a complex and demanding role; aspects of leadership awareness and absence of a non-profit leadership reference; the significance of ña ha!ò moments; practical aspects of team development and transitions and the importance of economic goals, including profit.

Discussion

Capturing the full richness of the experience of social entrepreneurs who are committed to both entrepreneurial activity and social mission, is only limited by this researcherôs ability to fully understand and carefully describe the generous expression of thought provided. As stated previously in this study, this emerging field has multiple definitions with attempts to define its boundaries, yet it is based on many disciplines, and the experiences of each social entrepreneur in this study were unique.

While the results of these findings cannot be generalized, they do offer a set of perspectives that can deepen the understanding of the phenomenon. It can provide information to those who seek to learn more about social entrepreneurship; assist them as

they press on with their goal to better define the field; and support the development of increased knowledge and expertise in ways to support social entrepreneurs.

One observation is that while the scope of projects in this study were directed to local and regional scope at their highest level of application, the social entrepreneurs in this study talked about impacting issues with national and global implications. They noted hunger, cultural barriers, health care access, and economic development as examples.

There were two themes related to social entrepreneurs that I anticipated as a result of the study, but they did not emerge to the degree of becoming a theme. The first was that there would be a gender component as part of the experience of social entrepreneurs. While a few individuals commented on gender or cultural barriers in communication that were related to an individual circumstance, it did not present across the board. That may be a limitation due to the selection of participants. The second theme that did not emerge was involvement of HRD in this emerging field.

A third item for discussion is the strong resonance described in the work of social entrepreneurs with aspects of the literature on commercial entrepreneurship. What is known from the commercial and social entrepreneurs scholars in regards to the importance of prior experience (Shane, 2000; Hill et al.,1999; Guclu, 2002) opportunity identification and alertness,(Kirzner, 1985, 1997; Baron, 2006; Haugh, 2007) intention, and self efficacy, and self efficacy, (Ardichvili, 2003; Borgia et al., 2005; Bandura,1986; Bird, 1988, 1989) resonates to a large degree with how social entrepreneurs in this study described themselves.

The experience of social entrepreneurs, however, offers strong distinction and no congruence with commercial entrepreneurship literature in the importance of events or experience of a social nature. The significance of the events [for each entrepreneur] seemed to propel the social entrepreneur to create a vision to make needed change in their community. This can be helpful information as individuals explore the role of social entrepreneur, and in the teaching of social entrepreneurship.

An unexpected finding was how infrequently the literature directly discussed the role of leadership in social entrepreneurs and how rarely, if at all, the participants made any reference to their role as non-profit leader. In several cases, comments such as non-profit is ñonly a state of mindò seemed to distance the social entrepreneur from the non-profit world. Overall, they saw themselves as entrepreneurs first as they described their actions, characteristics, and their goals.

Recommendations for Practice

There appears to be opportunity to learn more about leadership in social entrepreneurial ventures that could benefit organizations who support them. Because the role of the social entrepreneur is demanding and complex, appropriate, timely, accessible support systems could be developed in the community. Both the literature and the shared experiences of social entrepreneurs in this study, describe how the work often isolates them and leaves little time for relationships. A new model of support could be developed that acknowledges the time and work constraints of social entrepreneurs. Delivery for that support could be via public, community and private educational institutions, philanthropy, community development agencies, and the integration of social entrepreneurship into local organizations such as Chambers of Commerce. Social

entrepreneurs would benefit from the knowledge of HRD practices but may not be aware of the applicability because these practices are commonly associated with large organizations.

Philanthropy has an opportunity to learn more about what social entrepreneurs do and need. Working together with social entrepreneurs and the academy, there is opportunity to develop metrics and investment models that are agreed upon and could support the goal of sustainability. Practice implications could include the development of expertise in the foundation and funding sector by increasing staff knowledge. There are many national and international organizations such as the SKOLL foundation, Ashoka and the micro-finance sector, who have a strategic and high level perspective. Funders at local and regional levels would benefit from training and education about social entrepreneurship, and would help them integrate the action orientation of social entrepreneurs into their philanthropy strategy. This could include new models of measurement and long term strategy.

For those who teach entrepreneurship, opportunities include learning more about social entrepreneurship, and integrating that social entrepreneurship learning into the teaching of entrepreneurship as an option. While this recommendation is limited to the knowledge gained from one study, it seems that social entrepreneurs come to this work not as a stated career goal, but often as the result of life, work experience, or impactful events. By increasing the knowledge base of those who study and teach entrepreneurship, this knowledge could be more broadly disseminated.

The second recommendation for practice is to some degree, related to philanthropy. Both the literature and the study participants suggested opportunities to

develop new metrics to measure social impact and value. Partnerships between the business schools and organizations that support social entrepreneurs could jointly develop those metrics to measure the benefits of social entrepreneurship. This would benefit funders, supporters and community members, and provide confidence of the value of their investments.

Finally, I respectfully offer some recommendations to HRD regarding the need for attention to the role of social entrepreneur, as HRD serves as teacher, human developer and organizational change agent.

Advancing human development is one of the missions of the field of HRD. Built on a mufti-disciplinary platform, it is important to be responsive to the unique and changing challenges of HRD in order to create its own future (McLagan, 1996). The HRD literature sources on social entrepreneurship are few, and emanate primarily from the UK with most having come from fields outside HRD. I suggest there is strong opportunity for an increasing role for HRD in developing new understandings of social entrepreneurship. One of the most broad and inclusive definitions of HRD was developed in 1964 by economists Harbison and Meyers, who called HRD the ñprocess of increasing knowledge, skills and capacities of all people in a societyò (p. 2). In describing the importance of economic goals, they also stressed that human resource development is a necessary and additional condition for achieving the political, social, and cultural goals that are important in a society.

Recommendations for Future Research

As an emerging scholar and practitioner of HRD, I have an interest in the theoretical foundations of HRD that are comprised of economic theory, systems theory,

and psychological theory (Swanson, 1995). Because of this broad foundation, there is opportunity for HRD and its founding disciplines to contribute to the knowledge of social entrepreneurship through research.

The following themes were identified in the literature, but as experiences, they evoked minimal or no resonance with the social entrepreneurs in this study. My recommendation is that they be considered for research. They are as follows:

- The literature described the potential loss of status and social standing as barrier to becoming social entrepreneur. Do social entrepreneurs think this is meaningful?
- The literature discussed the importance of having or needing small business experience to be a successful entrepreneur. What is the impact of having previous business or small business experience on social entrepreneurship?
- The literature suggested that there is much to learn regarding developing new models of philanthropy support, as a better understanding of social entrepreneurs emerges. What is the experience base and understanding by philanthropy of social entrepreneurs?
- The literature suggested that policy changes and recognition of social entrepreneurs was important. Are there governmental or policy implications for social entrepreneurship that could advance the work, or conversely, present barriers?

Themes that were absent or minimally addressed in the literature but experienced by social entrepreneurs that provide opportunity for research are:

- Social entrepreneurs spoke at length about how they structured their organizations. What are the ways that social entrepreneurial organizations are structured to successfully integrate business and social principles?
- There was a strong sense of self-reflection offered by social entrepreneurs. What is the value of self-reflection and self-awareness of a social entrepreneur?
- Social entrepreneurs wear many hats and have limited support systems. How do social entrepreneurs deal with complex and demanding roles?
- Leadership is frequently mentioned, and the role of being a leader is affirmed by social entrepreneurs. What are the aspects of being a leader in social entrepreneurship and are they different from leading a non-profit?
- There are times when remarkable clarity of thought and purpose was experienced by social entrepreneurs. What is the significance of ña ha!ò moments?
- Social entrepreneurs are challenged to develop metrics that describe the value of what they do. What are the needed metrics to measure social value?
- As the organization changes and has different needs, the role of the founder and the roles of others change. How do you develop teams and change roles in social entrepreneurship?
- When social entrepreneurs refer to leadership, they are talking about what they do every day. When social entrepreneurs lead; is it people or projects? Secondly, why is there so little literature about leadership and social entrepreneurs?
- Related to the above question, is adaptive leadership an appropriate model for social entrepreneurs?

The importance of the growing field of social entrepreneurship generates more questions that provide research opportunities. It would be interesting to examine these questions to develop a greater understanding of the many aspects of this field.

Defining the Work of a Social Entrepreneur

While not part of the study, at the request of my committee I developed a definition of the work of a social entrepreneur to both assist in the participant screening process, and to clarify for myself what a social entrepreneur did. To formulate the definition, I used my experience and tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1966) gained through work as a human resource development professional, as a leader of several start-up programs in health care and higher education, and as a student of entrepreneurship. I chose a training and development focus recalling McLagan (1989, 1996) and formulated the following definition: ñA social entrepreneur is committed to the design, development and implementation of an enterprise, which at its core is the creation of value to benefit a specific social cause or missionò. During the theme verification process, I asked for feedback from study participants on the applicability of this definition to their work. I used a Likert scale and asked them to rate their level of agreement on a score of 1 -5, with a score of 5 being total agreement and 0 being no agreement at all. Seven of the participants responded with an average score of 4.9. The remaining four offered modifications; one recommendation was to add a risk component to the definition, and the second suggestion was to add a comment regarding impacting a broader constituency. This definition exercise was helpful in selecting participants for the study, and in developing the themes of self-knowledge and structuring the entity.

Personal Reflection

It is difficult to capture the many and divergent thoughts and impressions as I reflect back on the process of completing this study. What I have learned from others has penetrated deeply and I believe that in completing this journey, every one along the way has helped me learn more about myself - van Manen (1997) says that one is changed by the experience. He suggests ñ we gather other peopleôs experiences because they allow us to become more experienced ourselvesò (p. 62).

It is a humbling experience. What I know is that the answer is not always obvious. It takes time and reflection to get to the essence of a conversation, of a note, to a finding that is authentic and to re-charge in order to process the experience of learning. I have learned that this is satisfying work and making the time for its completion has been challenging, but what you pay attention to is what gets done. It takes your full presence, and others must go along with you. This is not a journey you can take alone.

Again, I say it is humbling to be in the presence and to have been awarded the opportunity to learn the experiences of others that some moments I could call ñbreath-takingò. I reflect on the participants who have shown persistence, courage and a sense of striving for the greater good. From them I received energy. They have committed and persisted and that experience has given me a great gift to believe in what I can do and contribute in a new way going forward.

I cannot help but recall the gift I received. When I was working to verify the oft-revised themes, several participants said to me, ñso, there really is something about this social entrepreneur thing ï I thought you were just talking about me!ò The work of social entrepreneurs has my admiration and commitment.

While this is a personal reflection, it really is not about me, it is about the other ï the multitude of others who have helped me grow and learn so I can do the same for others. There is much work to be done, it is important work and with this new belief and Rubicon that I have crossed. I am blessed.

Social entrepreneurs are evolving, reported (Nichols, 2006) and the next "generation of social entrepreneurs will combine the best of progressive charities, the voluntary sector, social movement and the business sector, offering potential for greater impact and a model for larger action" (p. 411).

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Appendix A

Human Subjects IRB Letter

October 25, 2010

Dear Ms. _____

My name is Jeanne Bailey and I am a doctoral student at the University of Minnesota in the Department Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development in the Graduate School of Education.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the study I have begun. I appreciate your interest in the project and enjoyed our recent discussion on the topic.

I am passionate about the field of social entrepreneurship. My dissertation explores what it like is to be a social entrepreneur ï an individual who is committed to both entrepreneurial activity and social mission.

I am writing you to invite you to participate in a research project on what it is like to be a social entrepreneur. You were selected as a possible participant via this letter because you have been identified as a social entrepreneur by a colleague, in the media or have been recognized publicly in competitions or through a social network of other community resources

I am interested to learn what it is like to live the life of a social entrepreneur. I am particularly interested in events, stories, and the recall of a moment, an individual or things that had an impact, either positive or negative in your experience as a social entrepreneur.

It is my hope that this research can contribute to the field with a greater understanding of individuals who have become social entrepreneurs. It could also help educate future social entrepreneurs, bring greater knowledge and insight to the topic. You may also find the project an opportunity for reflection and greater self-awareness which may lead to personal growth and development

Your participation in the study would include the following:

- Participating in a 1:1 interview of approximately 60 ï 90 minutes. This interview will consist of open-ended questions about your experience as a social entrepreneur. I will travel to your preferred location and schedule at your convenience.
- Reviewing the themes I identify from your interview and providing feedback on when the or not I have accurately described you experience. The review can with per in person or on the telephone.
- Clarifying and questions regarding your responses via telephone, or email as needed.

Please refer to the enclosed consent form to learn more details about confidentiality, risks and benefits of the study and the procedures.

You can contact me at 651-774-7220 (evenings and w/e), at 651-343-8516 (Cell phone) or by email at jmbailey99@gmail.com.
Thank you for your interest in participating in my study.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Bailey

Appendix B

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

ñCommitted to Social Mission and Entrepreneurial Activity: What is the Experience of Social Entrepreneurship?

You are invited to be in a research study of what it is like to be a social entrepreneur. You were selected as a possible participant via this letter because you have been identified as a social entrepreneur by a colleague, in the media or have been recognized publicly in competitions or through a social network of other community resources. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Jeanne Bailey, a doctoral student at the University of Minnesota. My advisor is Dr. Gary McLean, Professor Emeritus in Human Resource Development in the Department of Organizational Learning, Policy and Development, University of Minnesota.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of what it is like to be a social entrepreneur. We will explore and reflect on the experiences that you think relate to your being a social entrepreneur.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
to participate in a face-to-face interview that will last approximately 60 ï 90 minutes during which you will be asked to relate your feelings and experiences about being a social entrepreneur.

The interview will be conducted at a mutually ï agreed on time and at a location that is convenient for you. After I have identified the key themes, you will be asked to review them and comment in a second interview (in person or on the telephone) on whether the themes accurately describe your experience.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The study has no foreseeable risks: However, questions regarding your experiences may recall events or moments in your life that were painful or unpleasant. The risk will be minimized by the interview process, in which you may disclose as much or as little about your experiences. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

The benefits to participation are: the results of your participation will contribute to knowledge about social entrepreneurship. Individuals who are interested in becoming social entrepreneurs can learn more about the experience and help in the education of social entrepreneurs. You may also find this an opportunity for reflection and greater self-awareness which may lead to personal

growth and development. Other social entrepreneurs may benefit from this new knowledge about the field. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study.

Compensation

You will not be paid for participating in this study, nor will any expenses be reimbursed.

Confidentiality

The records of your participation will be kept confidential. Records of your responses will be kept in a secure location that will be only assessed by the researcher and advisor and will not be available to others. Interviews will be taped and transcribed with your permissions and only my advisor, transcriber and I will have access to the tapes and the transcripts. The will be stored in a locked cabinet in my home and be destroyed two years after the study is completed. You will be identified on the tapes and the transcripts by an alias or a number. The data will be coded so that your identity is protected and no information will be included in the research report that could identify you. Remember that you may choose to leave the study at any time with no explanation and no risk of negative consequences. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota or with current professional organization affiliations. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time with out affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions

The researcher conducting this study is Jeanne Bailey. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to call Jeanne Bailey at 651-343-8516 or at jmbailey99@gmail.com or Dr. Gary McLean at mclea002@umn.edu.
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjectsô Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

You _____ may _____ may not include my name and the name of my organization in your research reports.

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature:_____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Introductory Questions

Please describe you experience as a social entrepreneur.
How did you come to do this work?

Research Question:

What is it like to be a social entrepreneur?

List of Probes:

What is the experience like . . . .to be a social entrepreneur?

When you said _____, can you give me an example?

Is there anything else?

I want to understand more about what you said. is there another way you can describe it?

Is there a specific time or event that comes to mind when you felt that way?

You described _____. I would like to make sure I understand. Do you mean that _____?

Can you say more about _____?

Appendix D

List of Themes

Themes related to origins of social entrepreneurship

Personal experience as preparation

- Impactful events and scenarios
- Awareness of community need
- Vision of what would be different if a change was made

Self-knowledge

- Tolerance for risk and challenge
- Action orientation

Themes related to living the life of a social entrepreneur

Structuring the entity

- Integration of business and social principles

Personal engagement and commitment

- Defining moments

Role is demanding and complex

- Relationship aspects
- Dealing with uncertainty

Interaction with outside enterprises

- Connecting
- Collaborating
- Challenging

Themes related to looking forward

Leadership awareness

Aspects of team and role changes

Sustainability